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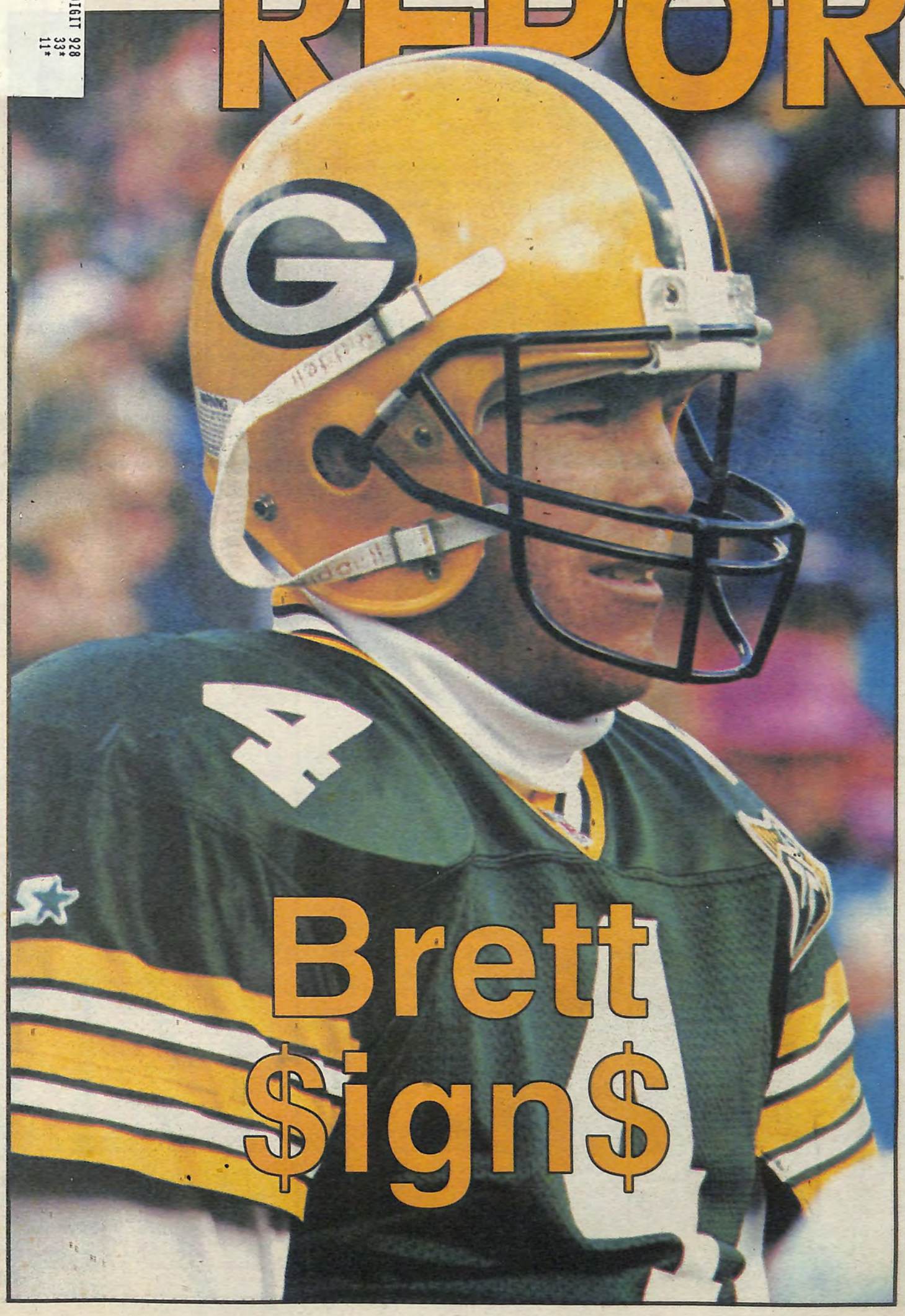
Ray Rutschke's

PACKER REPORT

A NEWSPAPER DEVOTED EXCLUSIVELY TO THE GREEN BAY PACKERS AND THE NFL.

Vol. 22 No. 4 August 6, 1994



Brett ign

Complete camp coverage

Tight end is thin

Hutson Center debuts

LeShon Johnson's high hopes

NFL

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Commentary

Intra-squad scrimmage was something to see

Ray Nitschke

I gotta tell you: Sunday's intra-squad scrimmage was unbelievable!

More than 40,000 sun-drenched fans — perhaps as many as 45,000 — watched the scrimmage — and seemed to have a ball.

The fans treated it almost like a regular-season game. I guess if the players have to have warm-up work to get ready for the season, so do the fans and I'm here to tell those of you who were not there, that the fans were nearly in mid-season form.

They stood, they cheered, they stomped and they worked on the wave. They actually worked on the wave — see, I told you they needed practice to get warmed up for the season.

(Coach Mike Holmgren told the media afterward that we should remind fans to can the wave when the Packers have the ball.)

The fans even practiced booing — when one of the officials ruled a receiver's diving catch was incomplete.

The atmosphere was great. In fact it was so great that a lot of the new ballplayers, not only some rookies, but some veterans like Guy McIntyre and Reggie Cobb, who have played other places, said afterward that such fan support for a scrimmage was unbelievable.

The Packers and I take our hats off to those of you who were there.

So, what did the fans see?

One of the important things they saw was that neither the Packer offense as a unit nor Ed West as an individual will curl up and die because Jackie Harris is gone.

Is Jackie a good player? Yes, no question. Will the Packers still throw to their tight end?

They did Sunday and they were successful doing it. West caught three passes for 41 yards — that's a very healthy 13.7-yard average. His longest catch was 14 yards and he said afterward he feels great.

Ed does not have the speed before or after the catch Harris does. But he is solid, dependable, doesn't miss many games and knows what it takes to survive and flourish in the NFL. He's not a highly paid marquee name. But no current Packer has worn the uniform longer.

Ed came here as a free agent in 1984. There have been an awful lot of high-round draft picks drift in and out of Green Bay since then. Ed's still here and he's still doing the job and that's something Packer fans can count on this season.

That the tight-end position is alive and well was evidenced by more than just Ed West. There was also Jeff Wilner.

And you're all saying, "Who the heck is that?"

A fair question. But I'm here to tell you this guy could develop into more than a fair ballplayer.

Wilner is a young man, 22 years old, who signed a free-agent contract here, out of Connecticut Wesleyan. Nobody in the stands Sunday knew who he was, but they watched him lead all receivers with four receptions, rolling up 37 yards and a 12-yard touchdown. He averaged 9.3 yards per catch and will be someone to keep an eye on as the pre-season progresses.

West likes him a lot; he said afterwards that he can see Wilner developing into a good tight end.

Time will tell and therein lies the challenge of training camp for Wilner and the rest of the young players — they must prove they can stand the test of time.

Last season, the Packers played 23 60-minute games in 25 weeks. That's a long, hard grind.

It's far longer than a college schedule and the opponents, week in and week out, are far better than college opponents. Every starter you play against in this league was a star someplace. There are no easy opponents at this level.

Guys like Wilner have to adjust to all of this, while also learning new plays, terminology and, often, technique. There are new surroundings, new teammates, new routines. They must play consistently and intently. Every snap has to count — they have to make it count.

They have to make sure that they make more than a one-time impression.

The waiver wire will soon be filled with guys who had a good game or two but were unsuccessful at putting something solid together week in and week out.

It's early yet. But if they don't build a firm foundation now, they will not have much of a chance later.

Every practice is important. Every snap is important. It's hard to sustain that during heat and humidity and being bushed.

But from the fire of two-a-day practices, they will emerge better players — 53 players who will help the Packers challenge for the Central Division title.

PACKER DATES FOR 1994

Aug. 1	*Packer Report* resumes every-Monday publishing		
Sat., Aug. 6	**Rams at Madison, WI**	**12:05 p.m.**	**state TV**
Sat., Aug. 13	**Dolphins at MKE**	**7:05 p.m.**	**state TV**
Fri., Aug. 19	**at New Orleans**	**7:05 p.m.**	**Fox***
Aug. 23	Cut to 60 players, by 3 p.m.		
Fri., Aug. 26	**Patriots**	**7:05 p.m.**	**state TV**
Aug. 28	Final Cut to 53, by 3 p.m.		
Sun., Sept. 4	**Vikings**	**Noon**	**Fox**
Sun., Sept. 11	**Dolphins at Milw.**	**Noon**	**NBC**
Sun., Sept. 18	**at Philadelphia**	**Noon**	**Fox**
Sun., Sept. 25	**Buccaneers**	**Noon**	**Fox**
Sun., Oct. 2	**at New England**	**Noon**	**Fox**
Sun., Oct. 9	**Rams**	**Noon**	**Fox**
Sun., Oct. 16	**BYE**		
Thur., Oct. 20	**at Minnesota**	**7 p.m.**	**TNT***
Mon., Oct. 31	**at Chicago**	**8 p.m.**	**ABC***
Sun., Nov. 6	**Detroit at MKE**	**Noon**	**Fox**
Sun., Nov. 13	**Jets**	**3 p.m.**	**NBC**
Sun., Nov. 20	**at Buffalo**	**Noon**	**Fox**
Thur., Nov. 24	**at Dallas**	**3 p.m.**	**Fox***
Sun., Dec. 4	**at Detroit**	**Noon**	**Fox**
Sun., Dec. 11	**Bears**	**Noon**	**Fox**
Sun., Dec. 18	**Falcons at MKE**	**Noon**	**Fox**
Sat., Dec. 24	**at Tampa**	**Noon**	**Fox**

*** National TV game for sure. More *may* be announced later**
ALL TIMES ARE CENTRAL

Dec. 31-Jan. 1	Playoffs Open....wild card games
Jan. 7-8	Second round of playoffs
Jan. 15	AFC, NFC Championship games
Jan. 29	Super Bowl 29 at Joe Robbie Stadium, Miami, FL

Ray Nitschke's
PACKER REPORT
A Royle Publication devoted exclusively to the Green Bay Packers and the NFL.

Vol. 22 No. 4 August 6, 1994

On the cover...

Brett Favre, Green Bay's $19-million man.
-- Chris Armold photo

In the middle ...

Don Hutson Center dedication.
-- James V. Biever photos
-- Nan Pahl layout

On the inside ...

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Scoring strikes

Long TDs highlight intra-squad

More than 40,000 Packer fans not only got to see their favorites for free during Sunday's intra-squad scrimmage, they got to see something they probably didn't expect from Green Bay's offense: The big pass play.

Brett Favre, Ty Detmer and Mark Brunell didn't have record-breaking wide receiver Sterling Sharpe to throw to. He's out until the last week of camp after undergoing toe surgery (see page 19).

But the trio completed 31 of 46 passes to 15 receivers for 498 yards and seven touchdowns nonetheless.

"That's a lot," Favre said. "It was a good day, but I was telling them on the sidelines it's not quite this easy on Sundays."

Among the more spectacular TDs was Favre's 65-yard strike to Robert Brooks that brought the faithful to their feet, uproariously.

"Robert was supposed to run a comeback," quarterbacks Coach Steve Mariucci explained. "But he felt the coverage broke down, threw his hand up. And it was an adjustment made by the receiver and the quarterback. That happens once or twice a year. That was excellent because that's improvised on their part all the way."

Brooks was well behind rookie corner Lenny McGill.

Mariucci and the crowd were also particularly pleased with two touchdowns from Detmer, the first a scrambling 11-yard sidearm throw to a sliding tight end Jeff Wilner with George Teague covering. Wilner, a little-known rookie who signed a free-agent contract out of Connecticut, led all receivers with four catches.

The other one was a 60-yard scoring pass to Jay Kearney, a rookie wide receiver from West Virginia.

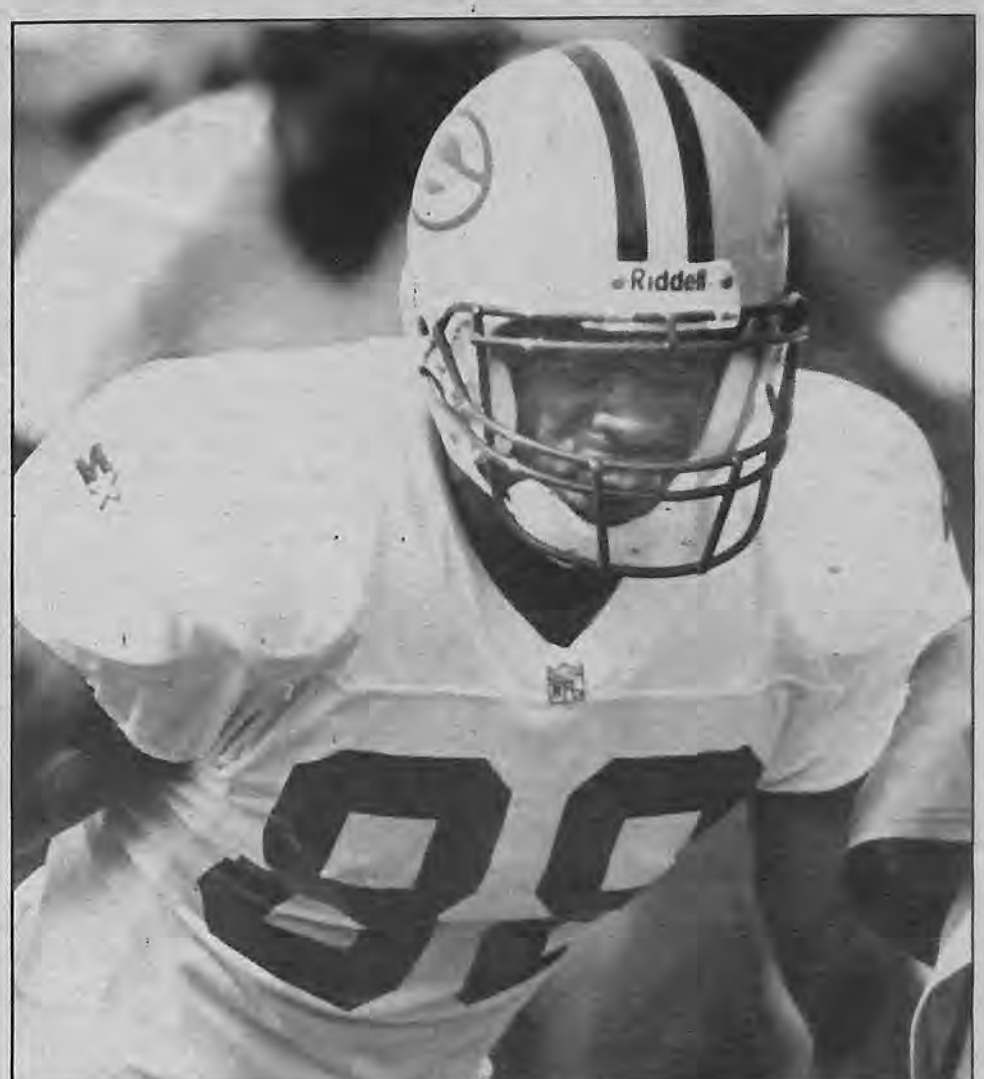
Streaking up the right sideline, Kearney got behind Corey Harris. Once he made the catch, Kearney whirled and ran toward the middle of the field, breaking the tackle attempts of Harris and safety Victor Brown, before diving determinedly into the end zone.

"That was a big play," Mariucci said. "But we're not so much a big play team. We're not going to throw the bombs up the field as much as some other teams do. Our big plays are nice throws, nice catches, nice protections where we're moving the sticks."

There was plenty of that, too, as 15 players caught at least one pass and six caught touchdowns.

Brooks just getting back into it

"That's one of those areas (wide receiver) that's going to be a tough call down the stretch," Coach Mike Holmgren said. "They're all doing a pretty good job and they all had their bright moments today."



Terry Mickens is one of three rookie wide receivers getting more repititons because of Sterling Sharpe's absence. Mickens caught three passes for 23 yards in Sunday's intra-squad scrimmage.

-- James V Biever photo

Not everything went well, however. Brooks dropped three passes and also muffed a punt in just his third workout since doctors corrected a potentially dangerous heart condition Tuesday, after it was discovered in a pre-camp physical.

"I was just up and down. I think I was a little rusty. My timing was a little off," Brooks said.

Offensive Coordinator Sherman Lewis wasn't concerned.

"I know it was from not practicing all week. That's expected. I'm not worried about him. He's just rusty," Lewis said. "He doesn't usually drop passes. He dropped a couple today that he never drops."

Said Holmgren, "I made him take off those fancy little gloves he was wearing and then he caught the ball. He was so anxious to play. He's a fine receiver. He'll be fine. He dropped a couple today that he never drops. But he did some good things too."

Favre completed 12 of 18 passes for 174 yards; two touchdowns and no interceptions. He nailed a 13-yard bullet scoring a pass to Anthony Morgan, covered by McGill.

Detmer was 10-for-13 for 189 yards and three TDs, including a 10-yard score to Brooks.

Burnell completed 9 of 15 passes for 135 yards and touchdowns of 43 yards (screen pass) to Dorsey Levens, a rookie from Georgia Tech, and 14 yards to Willie Harris.

Reggie Cobb, a free-agent running back formerly with the Buccaneers, ran for 17 yards on four carries, and fullback Edgar Bennett got 25 yards on four rushes.

Rookie LeShon Johnson of Northern Illinois rushed twice for one yard, but aggravated a pulled hamstring on his second run.

Linebacker Mark Williams sustained a knee injury that Holmgren feared might be serious. Other players had minor injuries: wide receiver Curtis Duncan (groin), running back Kevin Williams (hit in head), defensive end Gabe Wilkins (groin) and guard Charles Hope (groin). Duncan left the field but later returned, and played. It was not immediately known how much time Johnson might miss.

Fritz Shurmur, the new defensive coordinator, said he saw poor tackling and an inconsistent pass rush, mostly from his reserves, but added it wasn't anything to be alarmed about — although he was clearly unhappy his unit had given up so many big plays.

"We've only been practicing about 10 days," he said. "We've got a timetable and we're on it.

Don't hold your breath

Perhaps the most important unsuccessful play of Sunday's intra-squad scrimmage was the one which ended Brett Favre's second series: Flushed from the pocket, he threw the ball away.

The question is whether we were seeing a "new" Brett Favre: One more willing to take a sack or throw it away rather than risk an intercepetion? Will Brett consciously be trying to throw it away when in danger this season?

Packer Report posed that question to the young man. "I have no idea, Al, what's going to happen this year," Favre replied. "I take them one day at a time, one game at a time.

"I tell myself, I write notes to myself every night in meetings: 'Don't force the ball. Throw it away.' All those things that other quarterbacks do that I don't do. But I am going to try to be more conscious and do the right things.

"The biggest thing for me is I can't go into a game and feel like I have to make all the plays," Favre said. "That's the way I've been in the past and sometimes it gets me out of trouble — and sometimes it gets me into trouble.

"That's why we have all those other guys on the team. I will try to be more conscious of doing that, but don't hold your breath."

Nobody has ever written that this guy isn't exciting.

— Al Pahl

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Dear Diary

Tight end is one of the early

Thursday, July 21

The Packers are in good shape both literally and figuratively, head Coach Mike Holmgren pronounced during camp's first on-field day.

"We came in in good shape," he said. "The guys, almost to a man, completed their (physical conditioning) tests and I think we are in pretty good shape."

The team is in good shape figuratively because of this unprecedented statistic: There are no physically able holdouts. The only unsigned player is No. 1 draft choice Aaron Taylor, who injured his knee last month and will be out until at least December.

There were 54 rookies, free agents and selected veterans working out, in jerseys, shorts and helmets. Full pads will wait until at least Sunday, if not Monday,

Al Pahl

said Holmgren, whose remaining veterans are scheduled to report Saturday.

Two players who figure to be important but remain somewhat restricted in their ability to practice are starting strong safety George Teague and James Willis, a top reserve at linebacker. Teague is coming off a hyperthyroid problem which was diagnosed a month after last season ended and is now medicinally controlled. Willis had knee reconstruction surgery last season.

"Neither one of those guys are up to full speed," said Holmgren, whose medical people are letting the pair do just about everything except full contact. "It's up to their position coaches to monitor that...we are watching it closely."

When they'll be able to go full-speed is "hard to say," Holmgren admitted. "George, his weight is up, his strength is up, it's just his cardiovascular. And because of the weight gain, the muscles in his leg haven't caught up with everything. That's just a day-to-day thing. With James, he's a little bit ahead of schedule for the type of injury he had. We are optimistic but want to be careful. I am hoping they will both be ready in a couple or three weeks."

Holmgren doesn't foresee any contact for them for at least a couple of weeks.

Friday, July 22

LeRoy Smith, a reserve first-year linebacker who broke his jaw in a little-noticed morning practice collision with fullback Dexter McNabb, is expected to be out four to six weeks.

ESPN hypothesized San Francisco wideout John Taylor and the Packers would be a perfect fit, since Holmgren was formerly 49ers' offensive coordinator and basically brought that offense here. Taylor is in camp with the 49ers but is balking at a pay cut the team is asking him to take in light of salary-cap considerations.

"I would certainly be interested in John Taylor," Holmgren said. "I would be very surprised if the 49ers allowed John to get out of there but I would be very interested."

There are also cap considerations taking place here. The team asked defensive lineman Matt Brock to take a pay cut after his contract expired in February. Later, Green Bay signed former Bear standout Steve McMichael and eased off efforts to re-sign Brock, who was a third-round draft pick here in 1989 and has been a Packer ever since.

Brock sought employment elsewhere. Brock, who lives in Portland in the off-season, put his Green Bay home on the market and his wife arrived at Packer headquarters to pick up his belongings from the locker room. However at that time, his wife acknowledged the possibility of returning to Green Bay, in which case the childless couple would simply rent a place to live, she said.

"We did talk to Matt again," Holmgren said Friday morning. "I would like for Matt to be a part of this thing. He knows that. He just has a decision to make; what he wants out of it."

Saturday, July 23

This may have been the calm before the storm for some.

Rookies, free agents and selected veterans worked out for the fifth and final time alone this morning. They had the afternoon off before the rest of the veterans reported in Saturday night. Beginning with Sunday morning's workout, intensity will almost certainly turn up a notch because of the veterans' presence.

That the team has improved was evident Saturday because the smooth practice looked much more organized and polished than observers might expect from rookies and free agents.

"I think we have come a ways in a couple of years, I really do," Holmgren said. "The system has remained intact. I've been able to keep most of my coaches. The guys, the Edgar Bennetts, the Brett Favres, who have been here for three years, it's really kind of clicking in and they can play, using their athletic ability and not grind through 'What do I do?' so much. It shows."

Starting strong safety Teague, still trying to fine-tune his body, was back on the field Saturday morning after sitting out Friday afternoon's workout. Practice-in-the-morning and watch-in-the-afternoon becomes Teague's usual modus operandi.

Sunday, July 24

The first day the entire squad practices together at camp and the team was already without two potential starters.

Missing were Guy McIntyre, who signed only 10 days ago but is penciled in as the starting left guard; and wide receiver Robert Brooks, who is expected to at least compete for, if not earn, the starting position opposite Sterling Sharpe.

McIntyre, who has not yet passed his Packer physical, has a slight hamstring pull, according to Holmgren, who predicted the former 49er would pass his physical and be on the field by the end of the week.

An electro-cardiogram test (part of all Packer player physicals) of Brooks revealed an abnormality which kept Brooks from practicing for about a week (see box).

The Packers got some good injury news this morning when wide receiver Ron Lewis and cornerback Corey Harris appeared unhurt after a bone-jarring collision late in practice — perhaps the most solid collision so far, except for Friday's Dexter McNabb-LeRoy Smith accident.

The veterans reported in good shape,

Continued on next page

Brooks bounces back

Wide receiver Robert Brooks underwent a non-surgical technique on his heart last Tuesday and was back at practice by Saturday.

The following report concerning the findings and the technique was issued July 27 by the Packers' medical department:

"Dr. John Gray, the Packers associate team physician, and a consulting cardiologist noted an abnormal tracing on Robert Brooks, annual pre-season ECG (electrocardiogram). The tracing is indicative of a condition known as Wolff-Parkinson-White syndrome (or WPW), one in which an extra strand of muscle, often no larger than a strand of hair, forms an electrical pathway between the upper and lower chambers of the heart. Testing is done to determine the significance of this accessory pathway.

"Robert was referred to the Wisconsin Electrophysiology Group at the Milwaukee Heart Institute.

"Doctors Jazayeri, Akhtar and Deshpande did the electrophysiology studies Tuesday morning (July 26) and determined the accessory pathway to be potentially dangerous.

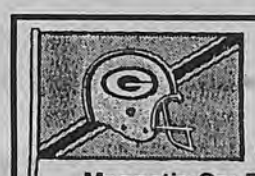
"A non-surgical technique known as radio frequency catheter ablation was done to eliminate the accessory pathway.

"The procedure went as planned. Robert will return to Green Bay Thursday, (July 28) resume his conditioning and when cleared by Dr. Gray, return to practice, as early as this weekend.

"He will take no medication and have no special concerns."

And indeed, he did not appear to have any special concerns when he returned to practice Saturday, July 30. "I'm fine," said Brooks. "I'm healthy. That's the bottom line."

He admitted to an uneven performance in Sunday's intra-squad scrimmage, catching a long TD pass but also dropping a couple other balls. Both head Coach Mike Holmgren and Offensive Coordinator Sherman Lewis seeming unconcerned, explaining the drops were easy to understand in light of the medical news and resulting lack of practice.



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ongoing camp storylines

Continued from last page

said Holmgren, who sent his strength and conditioning coaches around the country to monitor players during the off-season.

"They came in ready to go," Holmgren said. "They made some pledges as a team, without the coaches there, in Arizona (May's minicamps). They had a little team meeting last night again. I sense they are very serious about what they want to accomplish this year."

Holmgren said he delivered a special message during the first meeting of his entire team Saturday night, but declined to be more specific.

It's clear that after back-to-back 9-7 records and advancing to the second round of the playoffs last season, expectations of coaches, players and management are high. "This year, our goals are higher," Holmgren said.

Monday, July 25

The tight end situation is getting tighter.

The No. 2 man at that position, third-year-man Mark Chmura, will miss at least four weeks with a hamstring injury suffered Sunday afternoon.

A wide receiver who has been playing some tight end, Eric Boles, injured his hamstring Monday morning. The extent of the injury was not immediately known. Boles is a second-year player in his first season with the Packers.

"It's a hamstring," Holmgren lamented. "That's the one injury where you just shudder. They can linger and they can go all the way to what James Campen had, which is a major surgery (it forced the former Packer's retirement early this winter). That's unusual.

"We just have to wait. I'm hoping it's not as bad as it appeared," Holmgren concluded

"It's tough," said Holmgren, whose current roster includes only three tight ends: Starter Ed West, a 32-year-old in his 11th season, and two rookies, Charlie Dean and Jeff Wilner.

During morning practice, Dean injured his lower back and ankle. In less than 36 hours, he would found himself on injured reserve, along with LeRoy Smith.

Bill Schroeder from the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse is one of the young wide receivers getting extra work in the absence of Sterling Sharpe.

-- James V. Biever photo

Holmgren said the team is looking for another tight end. General Manager Ron Wolf said few are out there.

(Former Buffalo starter Keith McKeller, who had a tryout here within the last two weeks, recently signed in Denver.)

"I'll probably move another one of our current players to the position and see how he handles it," Holmgren said.

By the end of the day, Green Bay had claimed Bob Brasher off waivers from the Rams (see page 6).

Second-year cornerback Doug Evans pulled a quadriceps muscle during afternoon practice. He was working as the No. 2 left CB behind Terrell Buckley.

Monday was the first day in full pads. "The tempo was pretty good and I told the team that," Holmgren said. "We dropped too many balls, that is for sure. You cannot play if you drop passes. But I was very pleased with the tempo and the guys were into it."

Tuesday, July 26

Fullback Dexter McNabb got his first taste of playing tight end. Holmgren indicated it probably wouldn't continue and by the end of the day had picked up another reserve tight end: Rookie free agent Willie Felton from Bethune-Cookman (see page 6).

Free safety Mike Prior was waived in the afternoon with the intent of re-negotiating his contract to reduce his cost against this year's cap. He agreed to a one-year deal at salary substantially below 1993's.

Prior had signed a three-year deal worth $2.85 million last year. He had been scheduled to make a base salary of $850,00 this year with $1.16 million counting against the cap.

Fifth-round draft pick Terry Mickens took advantage of the absence of Robert Brooks and Sterling Sharpe, catching three passes for 78 yards, including a 60-yard touchdown toss from Brett Favre in a controlled scrimmage at the end of morning practice.

"He's a physical guy," Offensive Coordinator Sherman Lewis said, adding that the most encouraging part is his ability to run after the catch.

Lewis had to also be encouraged by the play of halfback LeShon Johnson, who made several runs. "I misread one or two plays," Johnson admitted. "Other than that, I think I did well. Just like in college, when you start out, it's slow, but then it picks up and you see the holes better and get better runs."

Defensive Coordinator Fritz Shurmur was happy with the way his unit executed the defense but unhappy with the way it tackled. Linebacker George Koonce stood out, positively.

Afternoon rains forced the Packers to use their $4.2 million indoor practice facility for the first time.

Wednesday, July 27

Shurmur's Tuesday unhappiness was replaced today by Holmgren's unhappiness. The defensive line did an outstanding job of stuffing the offense and the head coach was not pleased with the offense.

Continued on page 21

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New faces *continue* arriving

Aaron Taylor signs July 26

by Al Pahl

What does this say about society: Two parties do what they say they are going to do and many people react with surprise.

What we're talking about here is the July 26 signing of No. 1 draft pick Aaron Taylor.

After he went down in June with a knee injury which will keep him out until at least December, the Packers said it would not significantly affect negotiations — that they would pay him what he was worth before the injury.

Both before and after the injury, Taylor said he would do his best to be the best player he can. Obviously that promise now includes significant, and unforeseen, rehabilitation efforts.

Taylor made good on his promises early by working out at all the minicamps he could — including the one at which he was injured — even though he did not have a contract. And he's making good on his promise these days by making rehabilitation into something of a crusade.

The Packers made good by signing him to a four-year contract reportedly worth about $4 million.

Is that what they said they would do? Sure enough, compare these numbers to what the 16th man drafted received: The offensive lineman chosen 15th got a five-year deal worth $5.1 million and the wide receiver taken at 17 got $4.5 million over four years.

"They treated me just as they said they were going to," Taylor said. "I wasn't really concerned about it, because they gave me their word they would be fair.

"I've always said that I don't want to be paid any more than I should be. I just want to be paid what I'm worth. I think I got that. It was in line according to what everyone else got."

Taylor was the final Packer to sign a 1994 contract. All of the able-bodied players were signed, sealed and delivered on or before the days they were scheduled to report. This is the first time in recent memory the team had ZERO holdouts.

Recent signings include:

G Guy McIntyre

Guard Guy McIntyre of the San Francisco 49ers, an unrestricted free agent, signed a one-year deal July 14.

He had not yet passed his physical by July 27 but Coach Mike Holmgren expected he would by late last week. The hangup is a hamstring injury suffered during a personal workout before arriving in Green Bay. It is not characterized by the Packers as serious, but kept McIntyre out of action at least the first week he was here.

McIntyre, who is 33, and coming off a fifth consecutive Pro Bowl season, is expected to become the starting left guard, left open when Taylor ruptured the patellar tendon in his right knee during a mini-camp practice June 6.

The 6-foot-3, 265-pound Thomasville, GA., native started 97 of 146 games in his 10 seasons with the 49ers and helped them win three Super Bowls (XIX, following the 1984 season), XXXII (following the 1988 Season) and XXIV (following the 1989 season). He also played in the NFC championship games following the 1990, 1992 and 1993 seasons.

McIntyre, who has played in all 16 games each of the past six seasons (1988 through 1993) and has not missed a start over the past four campaigns, claimed the starting left guard position in the fourth week of the 1989 season and essentially had held it ever since. He was named to the Pro Bowl for the first of five consecutive times following the 1989 season.

He accels at sweeps and screens. The rap on him is handling a bull rush from massive defensive tackles.

He had arthroscopic surgery on a knee during the off-season but offensive line Coach Tom Lovat is convinced there is plenty of mileage left in McIntyre.

Wide receiver Curtis Duncan (80) signed with the Packers July 22, after starting in Houston the past four seasons.

-- James V. Biever photo

WR Curtis Duncan

On only the second day of the Green Bay Packers' training camp, there was already one new face.

Wide receiver Curtis Duncan signed the morning of July 22, watched part of the team's morning workout and was on the field in the afternoon.

"First of all, he's played a lot and caught a lot of passes, so he knows what the game is all about," Coach Mike Holmgren said. "He has great speed and he's a veteran. Right now we have a lot of young guys who we are looking at (at WR) but it's nice to have the guys who have played also, because they bring a certain maturity and a certain leadership value to the team and I always like that."

Said General Manager Ron Wolf, "I don't know if he's going to start, but he's got a great chance to."

Signing Duncan is "more than" an effort to simply intensify camp competition, Holmgren said. "We're looking, like we always do, to have the best possible team on the field. We want depth at wide receiver. Sterling (Sharpe) is not going to be able to practice during the pre-season and we had a chance to get a veteran who has been very successful."

Duncan, an eighth-year player who has started the past four seasons, went to the 1992 Pro Bowl after catching a career-high 82 passes that season, for 3,935 yards and 20 touchdowns. The 29-year-old caught 322 passes in seven seasons with the Oilers, making him the sixth-ranking receiver in team history.

The 5-foot-11, 184-pounder was a 10th-round draft pick out of Northwestern University in 1987. He caught 41 passes last season for an 11.1-yard average and three touchdowns, while starting all 12 games in which he played. He averaged 67 catches the three previous years.

Others:

On July 18, The Packers re-signed **running back Edgar Bennett**, acquired **running back Adam Walker,** another former 49er, as free agent, and picked up **wide receiver Eric Boles**, claimed on waivers from the Chargers.

Bennett signed a one-year deal believed to be worth a little more than the $180,000 base he made a year ago. The third-year pro will be a restricted free agent after this season.

Bennett, who started all 16 games at fullback in his first season as a starter, amassed 1,007 yards of total offense in 1993, emerging as the Packers' No. 2 rusher and receiver.

Walker had been unsigned after playing in 10 games for the 49ers last season, gaining 17 yards on five runs and catching one pass for four yards. The 6-foot-1, 210-pound 26-year-old also returned three kickoffs for an average of 17 yards.

Boles, 6-3, and perhaps 230, has seen action at tight end since signing here. The 24-year-old pulled a hamstring July 25 but it was not believed to be serious.

He spent part of last year on the Chargers' practice squad. He was the Jets' 11th-round pick in 1992 and spent that season on injured reserve after suffering a knee injury in training camp.

On July 19, the Packers signed two draft picks: **running back LeShon Johnson** and **linebacker Ruffin Hamilton,** leaving No. 1 pick Aaron Taylor as the only unsigned draftee.

Johnson, a third-round pick from Northern Ill., led the nation in rushing last year with 1,976 yards. He is not expected to edge out recently acquired fifth-year veteran Reggie Cobb for the starting job, but "He's too good not to play," running backs Coach Gil Haskell said.

Johnson stunned some team personnel with his display of raw speed at minicamps. The Packers knew he was rugged and relentless but he lasted until the 84th pick because some teams questioned his

Continued on page 15

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Working hard for the money

Bottom line: Efforts paid off, big time

by Chris Armold

It's a done deal.

After more than a year of negotiations, quarterback Brett Favre has a multi-year contract.

"Man I'm glad all that stuff is over with," related a very happy and relieved Irvin Favre, Brett's father. "I'm just whipped.

"This contract stuff has been such a mental strain but the final results feel real good."

Involved with the contract negotiations right from their inception, Irvin explained some of the activity which went into the successful talks:

"When you first start off you know there's going to be lots of phone calls and paperwork to fill out. Not to mention proposals being sent back and forth, burning up the fax machine, talking about an issue on say a Monday and having to wait until the next day for an answer. That's what's tough. Then if the person you're negotiating an issue with runs into a problem at his end, you may not hear from him for two or three days."

For the past 13 months that's how things went. Irvin Favre retired this spring from 28 years of coaching high-school football and turned a lot of his attention to the matter of his son's contract, working closely with James "Bus" Cook, Brett's agent.

Brett Favre will have even more reasons to smile this year -- millions more. Plus, his employer is still in the football business, which is more than CBS-TV air personality Lesley Visser can say about her employer.

-- James V. Biever photo

Went in with definite numbers

Irvin had nothing but praise for Cook: "We were very fortunate to have him working with Brett. He made sure that we were kept abreast of the situations and he didn't take any action without Brett's knowledge or my knowledge."

Although the contract negotiations started off very slowly, the Favre camp went into the negotiations with a definite set of numbers in mind, Irvin related.

With a total value of $19 million over the next five seasons, did Brett get the amount of money that his agent suggested?

"Well, what we were looking at was basically what the Rams and the Saints had offered Brett. Now, those deals fell through — not that Brett wanted to play there anyway — but sometimes money can put you in a different position. So we asked for 20 and five ($20 million dollars over the period of a five-year contract) 'cause we liked the idea of a long-term contract."

Hardest part: The distraction

"I don't think we came down all that much and I think the Packers came up a little bit. You know everyone has to give and take a bit. We dropped $1 million from that $20 million and we dropped on the signing bonus, but we expected that to happen. You don't just walk in and say, 'OK we want $20 million for five years' and expect to hear them say, 'OK you got it!' You know you're never going to get that!"

Speaking with Irvin Favre, it was very obvious the hardest part of the talks for him was the distraction the negotiations were causing Brett.

"In my opinion, Brett has handled himself really well during the talks, especially for a 24-year-old. When Brett went to the first mini-camp he had a little problem in his mind, I don't think his mind was totally on the camp even though he was there. At the second camp, there were also few problems, he threw a lot and put in a pretty good bid for the Quarterback Challenge Competition. His back was bothering him and he hadn't really thrown a lot, so he was sore. He called Mike Holmgren and told him that he couldn't participate in the camp as much as he would have liked to. Now, at the next camp, Brett came in and they worked him really hard. You know, Brett wants to be a good quarterback. He just doesn't want to be a regular quarterback. He really believes that if he's good, the Packers will be good."

Irvin Favre insisted that Brett wanted to be in camp as much as the fans wanted him to be in camp.

"There was the possibility of Brett not attending the last mini-camp as leverage towards expediting the contract. We figured that maybe if Brett didn't show up the Packers would speed things up. But instead we decided that the contract would take care of itself. Brett wanted to go to camp — heck he doesn't know it all, he wants to learn. He wants to be better. He wants to be like those big quarterbacks who get their name in the paper every week for doing this, that and the other thing. The bottom line was that we wanted Brett to show good faith. The bottom line for us was that we didn't want a holdout and we did not want a one-year contract."

Continued on page 18

Here's the deal:

Totals

Total package:	5 years*,	$19.0 million
Yearly average:		$3.8 million
Projected tax liability:		$8.5 million
Projected net income:		$10.5 million

1994

Base salary:	$1.6 million
Signing bonus:	$2.5 million
Reporting bonus:	$0.5 million
Projected tax bite:	approx. $2.0 million
Against salary cap:	approx. $2.1 million

** Deal expires the same year as the CBA, cap do*

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Rams

No.	Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Age	Exp.	College	How Acquired
1	Matt Turk	P	6-5	230	26	1	Wis.-Whitewater	FA-94
2	Chris Brantley	WR	5-10	180	23	R	Rutgers	D4-94
5	Sean Landeta	P	6-0	210	32	10	Towson State	FA(NYG)-93
8	Jamie Martin	QB	6-2	215	24	2	Weber State	FA-93
9	Jessie Hester	WR	5-11	175	31	9	Florida State	UFA(Ind.)-94
10	Tony Zendejas	K	5-8	165	34	10	Nevada-Reno	P8(Hou.)-91
12	T.J. Rubley	QB	6-3	205	25	3	Tulsa	D9-92
13	Chris Miller	QB	6-2	212	28	8	Oregon	UFA(Atl.)-94
16	Jermaine Ross	WR	5-11	192	23	R	Purdue	FA-94
17	Chris Chandler	QB	6-4	225	28	7	Washington	UFA(Ariz.)-94
19	Turhon O'Bannon	WR	6-0	195	24	R	New Mexico	FA-94
21	Deral Boykin	S	5-11	196	23	2	Louisville	D6-93
22	Marquez Pope	S/CB	5-10	193	23	3	Fresno State	T(SD)-94
23	Clifford Hicks	S	5-10	187	29	8	Oregon	UFA(NYJ)-94
24	Wymon Henderson	CB	5-10	188	32	8	Nevada-Las Vegas	FA-93
25	David Wilson	S	5-10	192	24	1	California	FA-94
26	Anthony Newman	S	6-0	199	28	7	Oregon	D2A-88
27	Mitchell Price	CB	5-9	181	26	5	Tulane	FA-93
28	Robert Bailey	CB	5-9	176	25	4	Miami, FL	D4-91
29	Dexter Davis	CB	5-10	185	24	4	Clemson	FA-93
30	Howard Griffith	RB	6-0	226	26	2	Illinois	FA-93
31	Steve Israel	CB	5-11	186	25	3	Pittsburgh	D2-92
32	Toby Wright	S	5-11	203	23	R	Nebraska	D2B-94
33	James Bostic	RB	5-11	230	22	R	Auburn	D3B-94
34	Tim Lester	RB	5-9	215	25	3	E. Kentucky	D10-92
35	Keith Lyle	S	6-2	204	22	R	Virginia	D3A-94
36	Jerome Bettis	RB	5-11	243	22	2	Notre Dame	D1-93
37	Terry Taylor	CB	5-10	185	32	10	S. Illinois	UFA(Cle.)-94
38	David Lang	RB	5-11	213	26	4	N. Arizona	D12-90
39	Beno Bryant	RB	5-9	170	23	R	Washington	FA-94
41	Todd Lyght	CB	6-0	186	25	4	Notre Dame	D1-91
42	Johnny Bailey	RB	5-8	180	27	5	Texas A&I	UFA(Ariz.)-94
43	Cleveland Gary	RB	6-0	226	27	6	Miami, FL	D1B-89
46	Yonnie Jackson	TE	6-2	260	23	1	S. California	FA-94
48	Rickey Brady	TE	6-4	246	22	R	Oklahoma	D6A-94
50	Ernest Jones	LB	6-2	239	23	R	Oregon	D3C-94
51	Blair Bush	C	6-3	275	37	17	Washington	PB(GB)-92
52	Joe Kelly	LB	6-2	235	29	9	Washington	UFA(Rai.)-94
53	Chris Martin	LB	6-2	241	33	12	Auburn	T(KC)-93
54	Brett Collins	LB	6-1	234	25	3	Washington	W(GB)-93
55	Andy Mason	LB	6-2	228	22	R	Washington	FA-94
56	Shane Conlan	LB	6-3	235	29	8	Penn State	UFA(Buf.)-93
57	Thomas Homco	LB	6-0	245	24	2	Northwestern	FA-92
58	Roman Philer	LB	6-2	230	25	4	UCLA	D2-91
59	Henry Rolling	LB	6-2	225	28	8	Nevada-Reno	UFA(SD)-93
60	Fred Stokes	DE	6-3	274	29	8	Georgia Southern	UFA(Wash.)-93
61	Ben Brostek	C	6-3	300	26	5	Washington	D1-90
64	Keith Loneker	G	6-3	330	22	2	Kansas	FA-93
66	Tom Newberry	G	6-2	285	30	9	Wis.-La Crosse	D2-86
67	Ronald Edwards	T	6-5	311	22	R	N. Carolina A&T	D6B-94
68	Brad Fichtel	C	6-2	285	23	2	E. Illinois	D7-93
69	Jeff Pahukoa	G/T	6-2	298	24	4	Washington	D12A-91
70	Wayne Gandy	T	6-4	239	23	R	Auburn	D1-94
71	Chuck Belin	G	6-2	312	22	2	Wisconsin	D5B-93
72	Clarence Jones	T	6-6	280	26	4	Maryland	FA-94
73	Bill Schultz	T	6-5	305	27	5	S. California	FA-94
75	Justin Starck	T	6-6	310	22	R	Oregon	FA-94
76	Robert Young	DE	6-6	273	25	4	Mississippi St.	D5-91
77	Darryl Ashmore	T	6-7	300	23	3	Northwestern	D7-92
78	Jackie Slater	T	6-4	285	40	19	Jackson State	D3-76
79	Leo Goeas	G/T	6-4	292	26	5	Hawaii	T(SD)-93
80	Isaac Bruce	WR	6-0	178	21	R	Memphis State	D2A-94
82	Travis McNeal	TE	6-3	244	27	6	Tenn.-Chattanooga	FA-92
83	Willie Anderson	WR	6-0	172	29	7	UCLA	D2B-88
84	Troy Drayton	TE	6-3	255	23	2	Penn State	D2-93
86	Greg McMurtry	WR	6-2	210	26	5	Michigan	UFA(NE)-94
87	Nate Lewis	WR	5-11	198	27	5	Oregon Tech	T(SD)-94
88	Sean LaChapele	WR	6-3	205	23	2	UCLA	D5A-93
89	Richard Buchanan	WR	5-10	178	24	2	Northwestern	FA-93
90	Sean Gilbert	DT	6-4	315	23	3	Pittsburgh	D1-92
91	Kevin Patrick	DE	6-3	255	22	R	Miami, FL	FA-94
92	David Rocher	DT	6-4	267	24	4	Auburn	FA-91
93	Jeff Esters	DT	6-4	285	24	2	Pittsburgh	FA-93
94	D'Marco Farr	DT	6-1	270	22	R	Washington	FA-94
95	Brad Otis	DE	6-4	272	21	R	Wayne St., Neb.	D2C-94
96	Marc Boutte	DT	6-4	298	24	3	Louisiana St.	D3A-92
97	Gerald Robinson	DE	6-3	262	30	7	Auburn	PB(SD)-91
98	Jimmie Jones	DT	6-4	276	28	5	Miami, FL	UFA(Dal.)-94
99	Maa Tanuvasa	DT	6-2	277	23	2	Hawaii	D8B-93

Packers

No.	Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Age	Exp.	College	How Acquired
4	Brett Favre	QB	6-2	222	24	4	S. Mississippi	T-92 (Atl)
8	Mark Brunell	QB	6-1	208	23	2	Washington	D5a-93
9	Bryan Wagner	P	6-2	200	32	7	Cal St.-Northridge	FA-92
10	Rich Thompson	K	6-0	203	24	1	Wisconsin	FA-94
11	Ty Detmer	QB	6-0	186	26	3	Brigham Young	D9a-92
12	Kurt Warner	QB	6-2	200	23	R	Northern Iowa	FA-94
13	Chris Jacke	K	6-0	200	28	6	Texas-El Paso	D6-89
16	Daryl Frazier	WR	6-1	181	23	R	Florida	FA-94
17	Craig Hentrich	P/K	6-3	200	23	1	Notre Dame	FA-93
18	Jay Kearney	WR	6-1	195	22	R	West Virginia	D6a-94
19	Bill Schroeder	WR	6-1	195	23	R	Wis.-La Crosse	D6c-94
20	Kevin Williams	RB	6-1	215	24	2	UCLA	FA-93
21	Curtis Cotton	S	6-0	212	24	1	Nebraska	FA-94
22	Lenny McGill	CB	6-1	194	23	R	Arizona State	FA-94
23	Sammy Walker	CB	5-11	200	25	4	Texas Tech	FA-93
24	Tim Hauck	S	5-10	187	27	5	Montana	PB-91 (NE)
25	Victor Brown	S	6-1	205	24	R	Tennessee	FA-94
26	Reggie Holt	S	5-11	202	23	R	Wisconsin	FA-94
27	Terrell Buckley	CB	5-9	176	23	3	Florida State	D1-92
28	Adam Walker	RB	6-1	210	26	3	Pittsburgh	FA-94
29	Marcus Wilson	RB	6-1	215	26	3	Virginia	FA-92
30	Corey Harris	CB	5-11	195	24	3	Vanderbilt	W-92 (Hou)
31	George Teague	S	6-1	190	23	2	Alabama	D1b-93
32	Reggie Cobb	RB	6-0	215	26	5	Tennessee	UFA-94 (TB)
33	Doug Evans	CB	6-0	188	24	2	Louisiana Teach	D6a-93
34	Edgar Bennett	FB	6-0	224	25	3	Florida State	D4-92
36	LeRoy Butler	S	6-0	197	26	5	Florida State	D2-90
38	Eric Boles	TE	6-3	211	24	2	Central Washington	W-94 (SD)
39	Mike Prior	S	6-0	215	30	9	Illinois State	UFA-93 (Ind)
41	Jeff Wilner	TE	6-4	250	22	R	Wesleyan (Conn.)	FA-94
42	LeShon Johnson	RB	5-11	200	23	R	Northern Illinois	D3-94
43	Willie Felton	TE	6-3	243	25	R	Bethune-Cookman	FA-94
44	Dexter McNabb	FB	6-1	245	25	3	Florida	D5a-92
47	Roland Mitchell	CB	5-11	195	30	7	Texas Tech	PB-91 (Atl)
48	Dorsey Levens	RB	6-1	235	24	R	Georgia Tech	D5b-94
49	Mark Williams	LB	6-3	240	23	R	Ohio State	FA-94
51	Paul Duckworth	LB	6-1	245	23	R	Connecticut	D6d-94
52	Frank Winters	C/G	6-3	290	30	8	W. Illinois	PB-92 (KC)
53	George Koonce	LB	6-1	240	25	3	East Carolina	FA-92
54	Keo Coleman	LB	6-1	245	24	3	Mississippi St.	FA-93
55	Fred Strickland	LB	6-2	250	27	7	Purdue	UFA-94(MN)
56	James Willis	LB	6-1	235	21	2	Auburn	D5b-93
57	Mike Merriweather	LB	6-2	228	33	12	Pacific	FA-93
58	Ruffin Hamilton	LB	6-1	230	23	R	Tulane	D6b-94
59	Wayne Simmons	LB	6-2	240	24	2	Clemson	D1a-93
60	Eddie Blake	G	6-4	315	25	2	Auburn	FA-94
62	Guy McIntyre	G	6-3	265	33	11	Georgia	UFA-94(SF)
63	Jamie Dukes	C/G	6-2	295	30	9	Florida Stt	FA-94
64	John Jurkovic	NT	6-2	290	26	3	Eastern Illinois	FA-91
65	John Fisher	C	6-3	265	24	1	Tennessee	FA-94
67	Paul Hutchins	T	6-4	335	24	2	W. Michigan	FA-93 (D6b-93)
68	Joe Sims	T	6-3	310	25	4	Nebraska	FA-92
70	Charles Hope	G/T	6-3	303	24	1	Central (OH) St.	FA-94
71	Mike Evans	DE	6-3	275	27	2	Michigan	FA-94
73	Malcolm Showell	DE	6-6	275	25	1	Delaware St.	FA-94
72	Earl Dotson	T	6-3	310	23	2	Texas A&I	D3-93
74	Lamark Shackerford	NT	6-0	270	22	R	Wisconsin	FA-94
75	Ken Ruettgers	T	6-6	290	31	10	S. California	D1-85
76	Harry Galbreath	G	6-1	285	29	7	Tennessee	UFA-93 (Mia)
77	Mirko Jurkovic	G	6-3	290	24	2	Notre Dame	FA-94
78	Ed King	G	6-4	300	24	4	Auburn	FA-94
79	Aaron Taylor	G	6-4	307	21	R	Notre Dame	D1-94
80	Curtis Duncan	WR	5-11	185	29	7	Northwestern	FA-94)
81	Anthony Morgan	WR	6-1	195	26	4	Tennessee	W-93 (Chi)
82	Charles Arbuckle	TE	6-3	248	25	4	UCLA	W-94 (Ind.)
83	Willie Harris	WR	6-1	196	23	1	Mississippi St.	FA-94
84	Sterling Sharpe	WR	6-1	207	29	7	South Carolina	D1-88
85	Ron Lewis	WR	5-11	192	26	5	Florida State	FA-93 (W-92)
86	Ed West	TE	6-1	250	32	11	Auburn	FA-93 (FA-84)
87	Robert Brooks	WR	6-0	175	24	3	South Carolina	D3-92
88	Terry Mickens	WR	6-0	200	23	R	Florida A&M	D5a-94
89	Mark Chmura	TE	6-5	253	25	3	Boston College	D6-92
90	Steve McMichael	DT	6-2	270	36	15	Texas	FA-94(
92	Reggie White	DE	6-5	295	31	10	Tennesseet	UFA-93(Phil)
93	Gilbert Brown	NT	6-2	330	23	2	Kansas	W-93 (Min)
95	Bryce Paup	LB	6-5	247	26	5	Northern Iowa	D6-90
96	Sean Jones	DE	6-7	275	31	11	Northeastern	UFA-94 (Hou)
97	Matt LaBounty	DE	6-3	268	25	2	Oregon	W-93 (SF)
98	Gabe Wilkins	DE	6-4	300	22	R	Gardner-Webb	D4-94
99	Don Davey	DE	6-4	270	26	4	Wisconsin	FA-92 (D3a-91

"How acquired" Legend
D - Drafted by Packers, followed by round
FA- Signed as a free agent
UFA - Signed as an unrestricted free agent
W - Waivers
T - Trade
PB - Plan B

Los Angeles Rams

Knox tries to win fast with veteran QB

by Jim Burgess

Only time will tell the wisdom of the Los Angeles Rams bypassing Fresno State quarterback Trent Dilfer in the NFL draft by trading down.

The Rams' rationale was that the addition of former Falcon free agent Chris Miller allowed them to insert a veteran into the lineup rather than a rookie.

The only problem is that Miller has gone down in each of the past two seasons with injuries to the same knee.

Despite his injury history the Rams signed the Oregon product to a three-year $9 million contract after Jim Everett departed to New Orleans this spring.

L.A. appears to be gambling that its traditional offensive set will serve as a better fit for Miller than Atlanta's wide-open "Red Gun" formation.

Miller will operate in a more conventional drop-back passing game that should allow him to throw about 20-25 times per game.

He also will benefit from handing the ball off at least 20 times per contest to second-year Notre Dame fullback Jerome Bettis, the NFL's second-leading rusher behind Emmitt Smith a year ago.

Miller will operate behind a revamped line that top choice, Auburn's Wayne Gandy, will step into. The group appears to fit the "Ground Chuck" style of its run-happy veteran Coach Chuck Knox.

NEXT WEEK'S OPPONENT

In essence, the Rams' brass opted to serve Knox's needs in his third season of his second tenure with the club. Years one and two have provided successive 5-11 records, meaning that Knox just may have to produce this season or depart.

Keeping this thought in mind, the decision to bypass Dilfer makes more sense in that it appears Knox must win this season. What better way to do so than with a veteran quarterback? Nevertheless, watch for the buzzards to hover over the veteran coach if Miller's injury-prone history continues and Dilfer shines in Tampa Bay.

Saturday's high-noon contest in Madison, Wis. will serve as a tune-up for an Oct. 9 game in Green Bay. Three of four Packer exhibitions will be rehearsals for regular-season tilts.

For the record, L.A. has won both previous pre-season games played in Anaheim, 27-24 in 1984, and 16-13 in 1992. The Rams have a 42-35-2 regular-season advantage, but the Pack has won three of the last four the past four years, including two straight.

Backup QB competitive

Chris Chandler, a well-traveled free agent quarterback with his latest stop in Arizona, has been added as insurance for

Continued on page 18

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'Cowboy' may become the next 'Road Runner'

LeShon Johnson is the fastest Packer in years

It has been a quarter-century since Travis Williams, a mercurial Californian with a highly developed penchant for finding the end zone, was sprinting to touchdowns over various NFL gridirons with record-breaking consistency.

Long enough ago, it turns out, that LeShon Johnson, the Packers' gifted rookie running back, had never heard of the "Road Runner," as Williams came to be known in 1967 after bursting upon the pro football scene as an all-the-way kick-off returner in his rookie season. So explosive was he that his 41.1-yard KOR average and four TD runbacks that year remain NFL records to this day.

Packer fans, meanwhile, have not seen his like in Green 'n' Gold since. The

LEE REMMEL

Packers, in fact, have not been blessed with a breakaway runner of his stature at any other time in their 76-year history.

Until now, perhaps. Ron Wolf, the Packers' astute general manager, fueled speculation the jet-like Johnson might well be a comparable threat when he described 1993's national collegiate rushing champion as having "the capability of being the most exciting running back this town has seen since Travis Williams."

Wolf, who made the observation while delivering his "state of the team" report at the annual stockholders' meeting May 25, went on to assert, "He's that kind of a weapon. He has that kind of electricity as a runner. If we get this guy some of the room we got some other guys, namely (Darreil) Thompson, (John) Stephens and (Vince) Workman, it's all over folks. I'm telling you, it's all over. He will go the distance."

Cowboy's '40' compares to Road Runner's

For the record, and purposes of comparison, Williams was able to streak 40 yards in 4.3 seconds. Johnson, who averaged an imposing six yards per rushing attempt during his senior season at Northern Illinois while amassing 18 touchdowns, is in the same rapid range.

"My fastest time was like a 4.34," the personable Oklahoman, a former rodeo rider of considerable talent, reported during a midday break from the two-a-day training camp practice regimen. "(But) a lot of people say I'm faster than that...I've never been a '40' man. But when I'm on the field, I feel so much faster."

And, it can be safely said, he looks it.

Johnson's acceleration to the hole and his speed "around the corner" have been early and obvious highlights of training camp, now in its second full week.

Like Wolf, Head Coach Mike Holmgren has been intrigued by No. 42 (the number, poetically, once belonged to three-time 1,000-yard rusher John Brockington) from the outset.

Calling Johnson "as quick and fast a player as I've had since we've been here," he added, "Now exactly where he's going to fit in in the total scheme, I don't know yet. But I know this — that he's faster than anybody we have on the field. And he will be exciting — and we're going to give him his chance in the pre-season and see what he can do.

"I think our fans are going to be very excited about him...I think it might have been the steal of the draft, quite frankly."

LeShon would be inclined to agree with the coach's appraisal.

Miffed over sliding in draft

He is, as a matter of fact, still somewhat miffed over not having been selected in the first round of the draft.

Having vowed on Draft Day to make those who passed over him pay for the slight to his talents, he now says, "It's like every team I play, I'm going to have a grudge against...But, basically, I'm just going to try to help the team put points on the board.

"I'm going to go out there and play like a first-rounder, no matter what."

He is expecting, then, to make an immediate impact?

"I hope so," Johnson rejoined. "Even though I come in as a role player, I hope I'm going to be the type of player to make that special play, or make things happen."

No predictions on 1994 yardage...

The Packers' offensive coaches, Holmgren assures, currently are striving to assist him in this commendable objective. "We're now working hard on figuring out the best ways to get him in the situations where he can show his speed and quickness," the coach reported. "He's very willing to learn and study, and he's a great young man...I think he has a bright future."

Though a legitimate "blazer," LeShon's focus will be upon amassing as many yards as possible, presumably on the assumption touchdowns will be an inevitable byproduct.

Wise beyond his years, he prudently makes no promises about the dimensions of his productivity this season.

...But 1995 could be big

But he is quick to venture a prediction about what he expects to do in 1995, talking in terms of a 2,000-yard campaign — a stratospheric level thus far reached only by O. J. Simpson in the annals of pro football.

"I know it's a big shot," LeShon admits, "but I've always set big goals for myself."

Asked if he had been "serious" in making the prediction, Johnson rejoined, "I was definitely serious. My first year is going to be a learning experience, but I hope in the next three years I can come close to that.

General Manager Ron Wolf predicted May 25 LeShon Johnson could be the most exciting back here since Travis Williams (1967-70). Head Coach Mike Holmgren recently said he's seen nothing in training camp which makes him think Johnson is not what they thought he was on Draft Day.
-- James V. Biever photo

Contrasting running styles

"This year, if I'm not in the game, I'm going to sit back and I'm going to learn from Reggie (Cobb), or whoever is in — learn from their mistakes and learn from what they do right."

This process, he related, has already begun.

"Right now, I'm trying to get in the hole lower," LeShon confided. "I ran higher in college...In college you can do that. (But) people are so much faster in the pros — you need to run lower.

"Sterling (Sharpe) told me today that I've got something they want — the football. So I'm going to start practicing on that (running lower)...If I want to last as long as I hope to, I have to listen to the veterans, like Reggie. Try to avoid tacklers — or when they do hit me, I'm so low it doesn't heave a big impact on me."

Johnson, who on Draft Day had verbalized high hopes of coming in as a starter, apparently has had second thoughts about this subject in the interim.

"Reggie Cobb is a great back and he has more experience," he observed. "And he knows what to look for in the game. I would be the first to admit I'm probably not ready. When I do get in there, I'll have to step up my game.

Asked to essay a comparison, Johnson says he and Cobb have contrasting running styles — a situation which could give the offense an intriguing change of pace.

"I think we're quite different," LeShon opined. "I'm more of a hit-it-fast type guy. Reggie is more of a read-his-blocking type of guy. He does a great job of that. I'm more of a get-it-now type of back. That's where I guess we're different.

"Growing up, I used to follow Walter Payton's style. I tried to pattern myself after him."

Although his running style may differ from Cobb's, Johnson says the ex-Buccaneer's practice-field example already has been of considerable help to him.

"I've picked up a lot from Reggie — like reading blocks, and running routes," he said. "I've learned a lot by just watching him. He's a very smart running back."

Veterans quick to counsel

One thing that has quickly impressed the newcomer in the transition to the professional level is the willingness of the veteran backs to offer their counsel.

"In college, there were a number of backs but they wouldn't help me when I got there because they were afraid I might take their job," he said. "But here, Reggie and Kevin Williams have helped me a lot. Kevin helps me every night...I have a lot of respect for him."

Though he is of more modest dimensions than Cobb, both of whom are listed at 215 pounds, Johnson says he has no concern about being able to hold up against some of the mastodons who will be striving to engulf him on the field.

"I'm weighing 208 right now (up from 204 at the close of his senior season)," he informed. "I'm like Eric

Continued on page 15

The Don Hutson Center

Practicing in Hutson's shadow

Art Daley

And now, ladies and gentlemen, we give you The Don Hutson Center.

What is it? The finest indoor practice facility in the football world. That's what it is.

It's ultra modern and certainly will become the standard for other athletic facilities to be built around the globe.

And Don Hutson? He was the Packers' greatest player. Don came back for the Center's dedication. Hutson's 81 now and he's done it all. But he told Packer fans that it was his "greatest thrill" and, what's more, he noted "nobody could envision a building like this."

To me, personally, it was just great on the part of the Packers to name this huge structure after Don Hutson. It was Packer President Bob Harlan's idea and for that you've got to say he has a wonderful sense of history.

Packer football chief Ron Wolf thought the expansion of the practice facility would be a greater attraction in the world of free agency — plus permit dual practices for Coach Mike Holmgren. Harlan gave the okay. The final tab was $4.2 million.

Naming the edifice after Don Hutson sort of finalized the public recognition of the many Packer legends. I have counted seven "items" that perpetuate the Packers in River City. Try these:

1 — Lambeau Field.

2 — Lombardi Avenue.

3 — The Don Hutson Center.

4 — Packer Hall of Fame.

5 — Names of Packers in Pro Football Hall of Fame inscribed for all to see inside Lambeau Field.

6 — Packerland Industrial Park streets named after Packer players.

7 — Lombardi Middle School.

Lambeau Field was named after Curly Lambeau, who co-founded the Packers in 1919, by the Green Bay City Council shortly after he died on June 1, 1965 at age 67. It had been known as City Stadium. Lambeau coached the Packers 32 years. His teams won six NFL championships.

Lombardi Avenue fronts Lambeau Field and runs about a half mile. It was so named on Vince Lombardi Day Aug. 7, 1968. It was several months after Vince retired as head coach and remained as general manager. Proud to have a street named for him, Vince chuckled later: "Maybe they should have called it Via Lombardi."

The Packer Hall of Fame was dedicated in 1976 and is the only such free-standing tribute to a team in the NFL. Thousands of fans visit the Hall every year to soak up the history of the unique franchise in American sports.

The names and playing years of the 18 Packers in the Pro Football Hall of Fame in Canton are well displayed in Lambeau Field. They are Curly Lambeau, Johnny Blood, Cal Hubbard, Hutson, Mike Michalske, Clarke Hinkle, Arnie Herber, Lombardi, Tony Canadeo, Jim Taylor, Bart Starr, Forrest Gregg, Ray Nitschke, Herb Adderley, Willie Davis, Jim Ringo, Paul Hornung and Willie Wood.

The Packerland Industrial Park on Green Bay's west side, the brainchild of former City Councilman Bob Houle, was created in the late 1960s. It is now a thriving area that houses such diverse units as a post office, a cement business, United Parcel, a Wal-Mart, to mention a few.

A high school was named after Lombardi in the early 1970s, a few years after his death, and it was appropriate because Vince was a high school teacher (Latin, physics, plus) himself before he joined West Point as a coach. It later became a middle school.

Okay, you've heard enough history. Let's get back to The Don Hutson Center.

It's hard for most of us to imagine heights and widths in feet but the size of the Center can be put this way: It can accommodate two 747 airliners. Also, it has a 70-yard field plus a 10-yard end zone and a 60-yard field with a 10-yard end zone. Thus, the offense and defense can work separately at the same time.

For you "feet" experts the length is 452 feet and the width is 270 feet. The maximum height is 90 feet (punt-proof) and the square footage is 112,400 square feet. The old building, known as "the barn," was 55,000 square feet. No comparison.

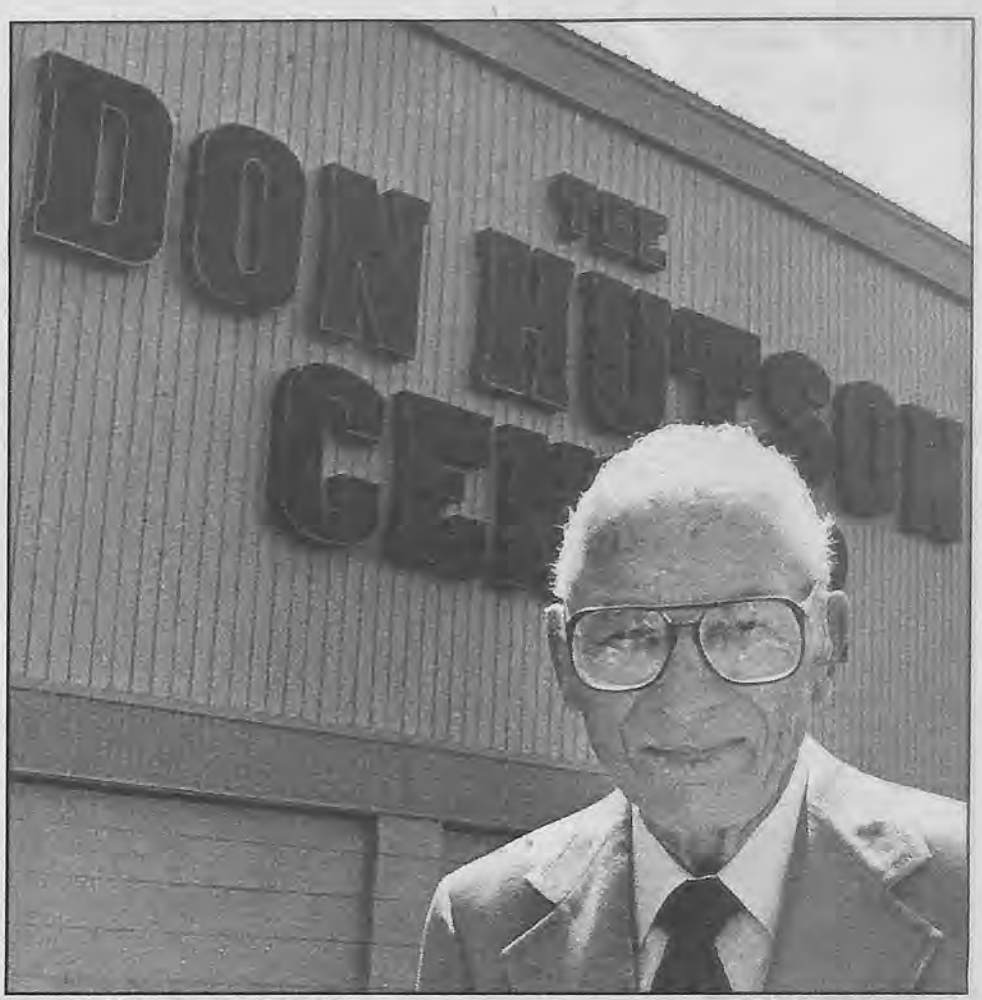
The two-acre floor, which resembles grass as much as possible, is covered with Astroturf XL, but it's special. The flooring is amazingly resilient because there is no concrete underneath as in other fields. The field covers one-and-a-half inches of rubberized asphalt — ground up recycled tires mixed with fine gravel granules, held together by asphalt.

The turf itself, greatly resembling grass, is an unusual woven polypropylene more forgiving than most artificial surfaces, thus hopefully reducing rug burns. The field markings are woven right into the polypropylene.

The building also has a coaches' meeting room, conditioning room, training rooms and rest rooms. There are four exhaust fans for ventilation. The maximum indoor temperature is 65.

Coach Holmgren was amazed by it all and noted, "If this building is any indication, the Packers are the most committed team in the NFL. It's just an unbelievable structure." Holmgren believes in moving practices inside in November and beyond so players can concentrate on what they're supposed to be doing instead of on the weather.

As you can imagine, all of this was really flabbergasting to Hutson. Don was asked how the building compares to what he practiced in and he answered: "I don't think that takes much of an answer. When we practiced, it was out in the rain and the snow."



Don Hutson -- called by Sports Illustrated writer Peter King the NFL's all-time best player -- pauses outside the Packers' $4.2 million indoor practice facility named for him. He and wife Julia presided over the building's dedication July 18.

-- James V. Biever photo

Hutson was recently named the all-time NFL's greatest player by *Sports Illustrated* and was asked what he thought about the honor. Answer: "I don't believe it."

That, my friends, is vintage Hutson. He was really never very impressed by his football feats, but when he saw his name in eight-foot-high letters on that huge building, he was impressed.

Continued on page 15

Quotable Quote

Coach **Mike Holmgren**: "This is what I do. I like to think I do other things, but I'm a football coach, you know? So it's fun to be back here. I like the enthusiasm of the players and I'm looking forward to it."

Quotable Quote

Cornerback **LeRoy Butler** on advice he gave **Terrell Buckley**, who has been quieter around the media this camp: "We're all cocky at Florida State. I just told him to be more optimistic inside, not just saying it. And when you say it, be prepared to back it up. Once you don't back it up, just be quiet."

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Dedicat

Don Hutson cuts the ribbon...

...displays his jersey,...

...and gets mobbed by autograph seekers

— James V. Biever photos

Don Hutson, his wife Julia, head Coach Mike Holmgren and
ty. They are standing along the $4.2-million structure's 452-f

ion Day

General Manager Ron Wolf watch the unveiling of eight-foot-high letters adorning the Packers' new 112,040-square foot indoor practice facili-
oot long west wall, which faces Oneida Street and Lambeau field.

— James V. Biever photo

Family Spotlight

Sponsored by **Tilton Equipment Company**

Mark William Chmura

Third-year tight end

Born - Feb. 22, 1969, Deerfield, Mass.

College - Boston College, sociology major.

Family - Wife Lynda, first child due in November.

The last book I read was - "The Client" by John Grisham

A movie I'd recommend to my friends is - Ace Ventura Pet Detective.

My favorite hobbies are - Golfing, target shooting.

The things I like about football are - The friends you make.

The things I like best to do with my family are - Spending time with my wife and our families back in Massachusetts.

I would describe my wife as - A patient person who has to deal with an impatient husband.

I would describe myself as - An easy-going guy.

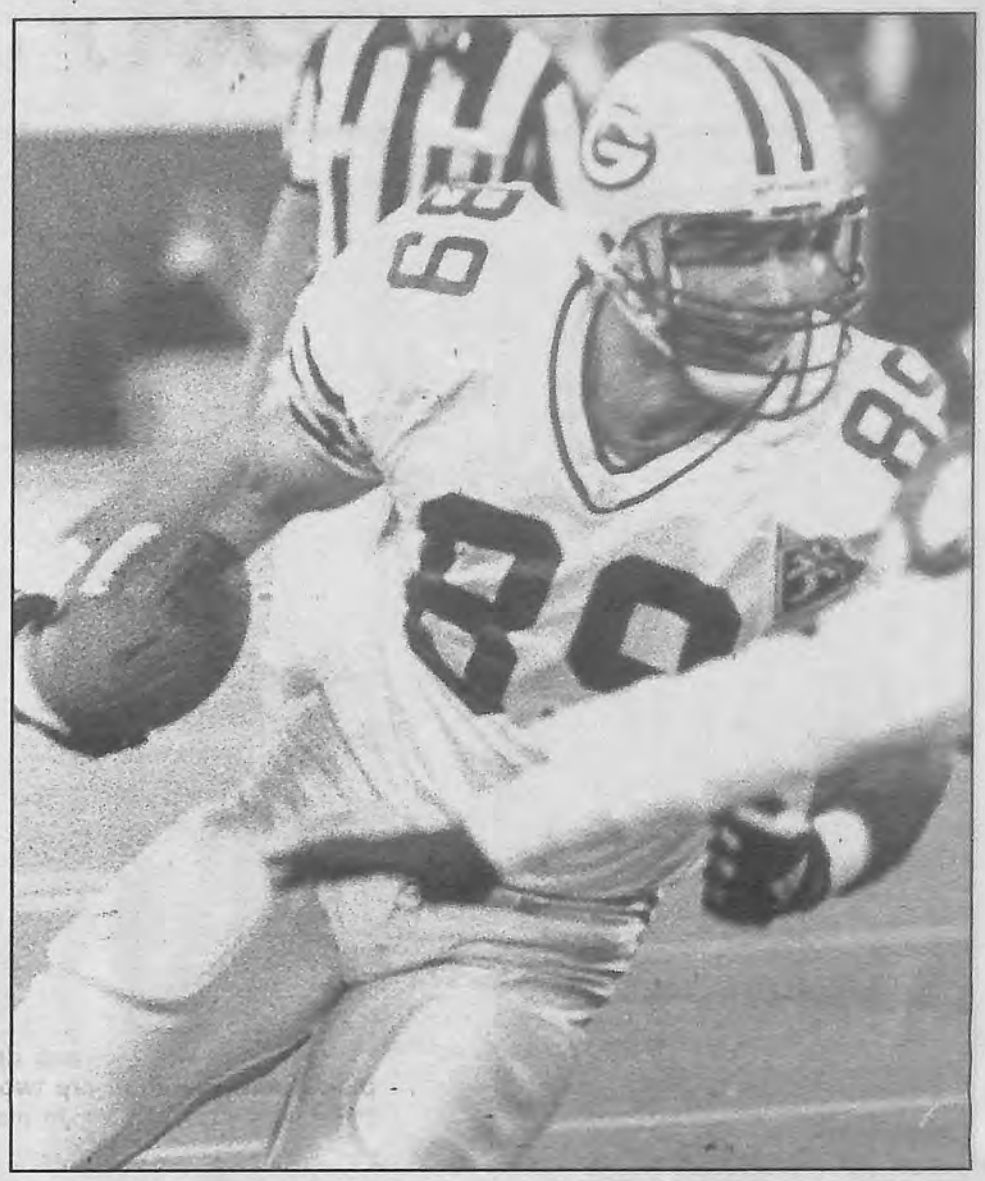
My favorite piece of advice to give people is - Eat, drink and be merry for tomorrow you may die.

The most influential people in my life are - My parents, having brought up six fairly normal kids.

My greatest personal accomplishment outside football - Going to become a father.

If I could live in another time, it would be - 1960s so that I could be the first man on the moon.

Who is/was the world's greatest leader and why - John F. Kennedy. Because he wanted to change the world for the better.



Big picture: Mark Chmura and wife Lynda look forward to the birth of their first child in November. Picture-within-picture: The Chmuras look forward to the healing of Mark's hamstring, which could take four weeks.
-- R.L. Montgomery file photo

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Daley

Continued from page 11

Tale of the Tape

Hutson Center Facts

Cost: $4.2 million.
Length: 452 feet.
Width: 270 feet.
Maximum Height: 90 feet.
Square Footage: 112,400
Fields: One 70-yard field with 10-yard end zone; One 60-yard field with 10-yard end zone.
Turf: Astroturf XL.
Lighting: 249 1,500-watt fixtures.
Heating: 23 gas-fired radiant heaters.
Maximum Temperature: 65 degrees.
Ventilation: 4 exhaust fans.

Fred Strickland (55) and draft pick Ruffin Hamilton are two of the newer faces trying to make the Packer roster -- a roster list that keeps adding new faces.
-- James V. Biever photo

Signings

Continued from page 6

change of direction, durability, hands and ball security.

"He might run into some people but he could have a real impact," Haskell said. "His speed is unusual. Blocking, he'll be fine. And he caught the ball very well at minicamp."

On July 20, **quarterback Ty Detmer** and **safety Tim Hauck** signed one-year contracts.

A day later, they inked another: 6-4, 242-pound rookie **tight end Willie Felton** from Bethuune-Cookman. He caught 52 passes for 726 yards and 11 touchdowns in college.

On July 28, the team acquired tight end **Charles Arbuckle** from the Indianapolis Colts and signed former Miami Dolphin offensive lineman **Eddie Blake** as a free agent.

Tight end **Bob Brasher** — who had been here all of three days — and rookie offensive lineman **Randy Bierman** of Illinois were waived to make room.

Arbuckle is perhaps the fastest of the tight ends who were brought in last week to shore up a thin position.

The 25-year-old Arbuckle, 6-foot-3 and 248 pounds, played in all 32 games during his two-year career with the Colts, making five starts. On Sept. 20, 1992 at Buffalo, he entered his third professional game with no career receptions but proceeded to make nine grabs for 106 yards. Both remain career personal bests.

"He's been in the league and has been a pretty good pass receiver," Holmgren noted. "We'll have to see how he does."

Blake, 6-4, 315, was a second-round selection of the Dolphins in 1992, the 43rd man chosen overall. He was inactive last season and underwent arthroscopic surgery during the off-season to repair a strained knee ligament and slight cartilage tear in his left knee. He had seen limited playing time during the '93 pre-season because of a bruised left knee suffered during practice July 29.

The 25-year-old, an All-American as a senior at Auburn, was moved back to offensive guard (his college position) last season after having been asked to play as a defensive lineman as a rookie in 1992. Blake spent the '92 season on the reserve/non-football injury list after dropping a weight on his left foot during the off-season, fracturing the foot.

Johnson

Continued from page 10

Metcalf of Cleveland (190) and Derek Brown of New Orleans (186)...And I've learned from the older guys how to survive in the league. I'm definitely not too small to play in the NFL. I've just got a big heart. That's all you have to have — a big heart."

Nickname is based on lifestyle

Like Travis Williams before him, he has come into pro football with a colorful nickname — one, however, not associated with his current professional employment.

Known as "Cowboy," he explained, "That comes from my background. They found that I used to ride bulls and horses, all through high school and junior college (Oklahoma A&M Junior College). When I went to junior college, too, I wore boots and jeans, so people started calling me 'Cowboy," and it stuck with me."

Not so on the Packer scene — at least so far.

"A couple of guys call me Cowboy," LeShon, who still wears boots, affirmed. "A few players have. But I guess it hasn't caught on here yet."

There was a time when he gave some consideration to trying his hand as a professional rodeo rider.

"I got a lot of seconds and thirds (in competition)," LeShon reported. "My Dad said if I had stuck with it, I would be one of the top ones...But football was something I wanted to do and I stuck with that.

"My Dad helped me make the decision. He said, 'There's no money in rodeos.' He helped push me the right way."

Though he has left it behind, his family continues to be deeply involved in the sport. "My two older brothers still do it — it's kind of how they earn their living, breaking horses and riding bulls in rodeos," Johnson said. "And when I was growing up, my Dad rode bulls professionally...We own a horse ranch outside of Tulsa. It's pretty big — my Dad's got about 40 to 50 head of horses."

A younger family member , however, is following in LeShon's footsteps.

His younger brother may be even better

"My younger brother, Michael Mayfield — he's my half-brother — is a football player and he broke all of my high-school records." Johnson informed. "A lot of people say he is going to be better than I am....And I'm teaching him everything I know. He's already 6-1 and about 205. I think he's going to be a great player."

LeShon and Michael, it turns out, also have something else in common.

"We both wore the same number in high school, 42," Johnson said. "It's been a family tradition. My uncles passed it on to my cousins. Then I wore it, I passed it on to my brother and he wore it.

"And," LeShon related with a proud smile, "they retired it this year at my high school — Haskell, Ok. High School — on February first. Every year, from now on out, they said it's going to be 'LeShon Johnson Day' at Haskell High School on February first."

At the moment, however, there is a new world for LeShon Eugene Johnson to conquer. It may take a little longer than it did at Haskell but, for the present, LeShon is willing to exercise patience.

"It's like when I went to Northern Illinois from junior college," he said. "I never in the world thought I would end up at Northern Illinois (and, perhaps, as the nation's rushing champion). But, like Dad said, everything happens for a reason.

That's how I look at it. Only time will tell.

"I think God had something planned out for me. I'm in no rush...I'll be out there — and once I get out there, I'll just do my thing."

Ron Wolf and Mike Holmgren, it is safe to assume, can hardly wait.

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CENTRAL ISSUES

Chicago Bears

COACH: Dave Wannstedt

1993 RECORDS: 7-9 (fourth); 3-5 in division; 5-7 in conference; 3-5 at home; 4-4 on road.

1993 TEAM LEADERS: Passing: Jim Harbaugh, 200-325, 2002 yds., 11 INT, 7 TD; Rushing: Neal Anderson, 202-646 yds., 4 TD; Receiving: Tom Waddle, 44-552 yds., 1 TD; Sacks: Richard Dent, 12.5; Interceptions: Mark Carrier, 4-94 yds., 1 TD.

STRENGTHS: As usual, the defense—led by Pro Bowl DBs Donnell Woolford and Carrier — will carry the Bears. ... The kicking game, with Kevin Butler and Chris Gardocki, is also strong.

WEAKNESSES: Losing pass-rushing DE Richard Dent will hurt. ... The offense was the NFL's worst last season, and the quarterback change to Erik Kramer can only help. ... It looks like RBs Lewis Tillman, Merrill Hoge and Tim Worley will carry the load.

QUARTERBACK SITUATION: The Bears finally cut their unproductive ties with Harbaugh and signed former Lion Kramer, who has shown an ability to lead a team in the clutch. However, it's too much to ask of him to carry this team unless the running game operates with consistency.

COACH'S CORNER: "I guarantee that we will find a way to win in December," Wannstedt said.

1994 PROJECTION: Fifth.

Detroit Lions

COACH: Wayne Fontes

1993 RECORDS: 10-6 (first); 4-4 in division; 8-6 in conference; 5-3 at home; 5-3 on road.

1993 TEAM LEADERS: Passing: Rodney Peete, 157-252, 1670 yds., 14 INT, 6 TD; Rushing: Barry Sanders, 243-1115 yds., 3 TD; Receiving: Herman Moore, 61-935 yds., 6 TD; Sacks: Robert Porcher, 8.5; Interceptions: Pat Swilling, 3-16 yds.

STRENGTHS: It sounds strange to say, but the offense will carry this team, especially if free agent QB Scott Mitchell makes the early adjustment. ... Sanders and Moore are big-play performers. ... Fontes won't have the quarterback circus he's had in the past, and that stability should only help.

WEAKNESSES: There are holes in the secondary and on the defensive line. If anybody gets hurt on this side of the ball, as Bennie Blades and Melvin Jenkins were last year, the Lions can look for a lot of shootouts.

QUARTERBACK SITUATION: The signing of Mitchell indicates Detroit's seriousness in winning. Fontes could no longer juggle his passers, and cutting the ties with the disgruntled Peete and Andre Ware were good decisions.

COACH'S CORNER: "We've complained in the past about not getting the respect we deserve. Now we have the opportunity to get it — if we deserve it."

1994 PROJECTION: Third.

Minnesota Vikings

COACH: Dennis Green

1993 RECORDS: 9-7 (second); 6-2 in division; 7-5 in conference; 4-4 at home; 5-3 on road.

1993 TEAM LEADERS: Passing: Jim McMahon, 200-331, 1976 yds., 8 INT, 9 TD; Rushing: Scottie Graham, 118-487 yds., 3 TD; Receiving: Cris Carter, 86-1071 yds., 9 TD; Sacks: Chris Doleman, John Randle 12.5; Interceptions: Vencie Glenn, 5-49 yds.

STRENGTHS: Having the NFL's No. 1 ranked defense helps, although losing Doleman will hurt. ... The Vikings finally solved their quarterback problem with the acquisition of Warren Moon. ... If RB Robert Smith and Terry Allen recover from knee injuries, it will give Moon the balanced attack he needs.

WEAKNESSES: The loss of Doleman can't be overstated. The guy can play. ... The offensive line is only average, which is the key to both Moon's success and the running game. ... Despite their high defensive ranking, teams can still run between the tackles on this team.

QUARTERBACK SITUATION: Not surprisingly, the Vikings, who were bounced in the first round of the playoffs the last two years, are thinking about January with Moon. One of the season's most interesting questions will be how Moon performs away from the run-and-shoot offense. That format generated big numbers in Houston, but there's a school of thought which says he could be more productive from a winning standpoint in a more conventional system.

COACH'S CORNER: "People are talking about us being a Super Bowl contender, and that doesn't bother me," Green said.

1994 PROJECTION: First.

Tampa Bay Buccaneers

COACH: Sam Wyche

1993 RECORDS: 5-11 (fifth); 3-5 in division; 4-8 in conference; 3-5 at home; 2-6 on road.

1993 TEAM LEADERS: Passing: Craig Erickson, 233-457, 3054 yds., 21 INT, 18 TD; Rushing: Reggie Cobb, 221-658 yds., 3 TD; Receiving: Courtney Hawkins, 62-933 yds., 5 TD; Sacks: Ray Seals, 8.5; Interceptions: Joe King, 3-29 yds.

STRENGTHS: It's hard to find a strength of a team that won only five games, but let's start by saying the Bucs closed strong and never quit. They even beat Denver on the road. ... The defense is growing with Eric Curry and Ricky Reynolds. However, to make the step toward dominating, the pass rush needs to improve.

WEAKNESSES: Wyche is going with Erickson as his passer. That's not bad, but there will be more growing pains. ... It would help Erickson's development if he had a line and running game. He doesn't, which means he'll spend a lot of time on his back.

QUARTERBACK SITUATION: Trent Dilfer is the quarterback of the future, but the job belongs to Erickson. In a nutshell, Wyche's job security rests on two inexperienced quarterbacks. Hope he's renting.

COACH'S CORNER: "We've added too many good players not to get better," Wyche said.

1994 PROJECTION: Fourth

Green Bay Packers

STRENGTHS: The Favre-Sharpe combination. ... The pass-rushing tandem of White and Sean Jones. ... Kicker Chris Jacke's accuracy. ... With high expectations last season, this team floundered early, but composed itself to get into the playoffs. Other teams might've folded.

WEAKNESSES: When your leading rusher doesn't even get 700 yards, you can't win this division. ... Reggie Cobb, who didn't get it done in Tampa Bay, is now being asked to carry the Packers' rush load. ... The Packers need a complementary receiver to Sharpe. ... What happens if Favre gets hurt?

QUARTERBACK SITUATION: Favre is back, which means the Packers can return to the playoffs. He's rapidly developing into one of the game's big-play passers.

COACH'S CORNER: "We should be better than 9-7, and should go to the playoffs. I think we're approaching that type of team," Coach Mike Holmgren said.

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SATISFACTION GUARANTEED

Rams

Continued from page 9

Miller. However, three-year Tulsa product T.J. Rubley may have something to say about that. Another backup possibility is two-year Weber State man Jamie Martin.

As most early pre-season games dictate, look for neither team to go with their starting QBs too long, particularly the Rams and the delicate Miller.

The remainder of the Ram backfield candidates around the firmly-entrenched Bettis includes Tim Lester, David Lang, Russell White and third-round Auburn rookie James Bostic.

L.A. will miss wide receiver Henry Ellard who departed to Washington. To compensate they acquired New England wideout Greg McMurtry to compete with veterans Willie "Flipper" Anderson and former Charger Nate Lewis. Second-round Memphis State draft pick Isaac Bruce will also compete for a starting berth. Providing stability at tight end is two-year Penn State product Troy Drayton.

Gandy will be groomed up front by tackle Jackie Slater, a 40-year old in his 19th NFL season. The rest of the line should feature Onalaska, Wis. native Tom Newberry, Bern Brostek, and Leo Goeas.

Former University of Wisconsin guard Chuck Bellin is among the rookies seeking a spot.

Rams drafted defense

The Rams' draft consisted mostly of defenders, particularly backs and linebackers. They added Nebraska's Toby Wright and Virginia's Keith Lyle in the secondary and Wayne State's Brad Ottis and Oregon's Ernest Jones as 'backers.

Cleveland free-agent cornerback Terry Taylor was also added to compete with Todd Lyght, Robert Bailey and Anthony Newman in a secondary that remains one of the club's biggest concerns.

The two rookie linebackers should serve as valuable backups to starters Roman Phifer, Shane Conlan and Henry Rolling. Former Packer Brett Collins is in the mix.

The defensive line is led by Sean Gilbert and strengthened by the addition of ex-Dallas tackle Jimmie Jones. Fred Stokes and Robert Young are a solid pair of ends as illustrated by their combined 16.5 sacks last season.

Blair Bush is still bending over

Placekicker Tony Zendejas was more effective on 50-yard plus field goals last campaign than he was inside mid-field. He dialed long distance six-of-eight times and was 10-15 otherwise.

The punting game suffered last year when Sean Landetta finished last in the NFC with a 33.5 net average. Expect a long list of obscure free agents to compete for the spot, taking snaps from former Packer Blair Bush.

Speaking of obscurity, the Rams also ranked last in the NFL in punt returns and 12th on kickoff returns. Expect considerable experimentation in the pre-season.

Favre

Continued from page 7

Nobody wanted a holdout

So, was there the possibility of a holdout? According to Irvin: "We hated to talk about it but reality dictated that we had to talk about it. I asked him, 'Brett what do you want to do? Do you want to go on up there? If you're not going to hold out, you might as well go ahead and sign anything they got."

Thankfully for Brett Favre, the Packers and those of us who cheer for the Green and Gold, the debilitating mistake Don Majkowski made in 1990 was not repeated.

"We felt all along that Brett was worth at least $4 million a year. In the end we were able to work it out and we were not that far away, like $3.8 million a year. The first-year signing bonus was acceptable and we got to the point where we said, 'We think we can live with this.'"

With the process completed, Irvin Favre sounded relaxed and described the overall talks as being friendly but businesslike. "We never lost our cool, we got aggravated as heck sometimes yeah, but each side never argued or cursed at each other. It was all very professional.

"You know, in general we've been very comfortable and happy with the whole situation. Now, four or five years down the road the contract may not look that good but what you do is take care of business now. You have to look a little bit at the future but you really don't know what the future looks like. I mean, salaries may be less than they are now with the salary cap — heck, anything can happen."

'Brett didn't like this part'

"It was strictly business and that was the part of football that Brett and me had never really been associated with. Brett didn't like this part of football."

So the question: "When is Favre going to sign?" Has been put to rest for the next five years.

With all their players signed and training camp in full swing, the future for the Packers and their fans continues to look bright.

Oh yeah, and what does Brett plan on doing with his new-found millions?

"Put it in the bank and maybe buy a new shirt," he said at the press conference announcing his signing.

OK, Brett.

Don't spend it all in one place.

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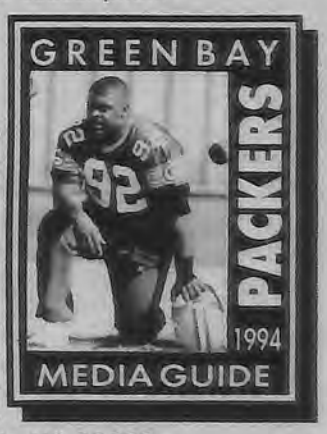

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PACKER NOTES

Media-guide mailing planned for next month

Subscribers who expect 1994 Packer Media Guides shouldn't look for them until early September.

Packer Report has not received them yet and does not plan to mail them until the last week of August at the very earliest. More likely, they will be mailed soon after Labor Day.

To receive one, readers must pay for their subscription by Sept. 5.

Cuts, retirements, IR moves occur

It's early, but cuts and retirements have happened already. There are even players on injured reserve.

Wide receiver Lionell Crawford was released July 20 when he failed his physical because of an ankle injury sustained when he hit a sprinkler head while running on his own at his old high school. The former University of Wisconsin wideout and quarterback spent all of last season on the Packer practice squad. He originally signed a free-agent contract with the Packers April 30, 1993.

Tackle Christopher Perez was released July 21 when he failed his physical because of a lower-back problem.

Defensive tackle Scott Mersereau, signed from the Jets during the off-season, retired after failing a pre-camp physcial because of a lower-back problem.

Linebacker LeRoy Smith (broken jaw) and tight end Charlie Dean (back) were placed on IR July 26. They must sit out the entire season.

All hands on deck

Every able-bodied Packer signed before he was scheduled to report to training camp.

Having the players signed is "nice," Coach Mike Holmgren said the first day of two-a-days, July 21. "It's the first time since we've been here that that's happened.

"More than anything else, No. 1, the player who did not participate in camp is at a big disadvantage in my opinion. Secondly, the injury possibility: We've seen that in the two years; a guy holds out and then he gets hurt. And third: He's missing out on all those practice sessions that allow him to become a better player."

Holmgren was unsure whether the first year of the salary cap was the single biggest reason for the signings. "I think in three years I could probably answer that — after seeing how the cap settles in and the players settle into it. I am sure it has something to do with it but everyone now is acutely aware of how much money everyone has left — those are all published figures."

Sterling *might* play soon

July 27, the medical and coaching staffs revised Sterling Sharpe's timetable. "Our plan is to hopefully play him in the last pre-season game, and practice him full-go the week prior to that game," Coach Mike Holmgren outlined. "Between now and that point, condition him and bring him along and get him to do a little more all the time.

"We are not taking many chances on him cutting. He can run straight-ahead pretty good and he can jump and do things like that. But we haven't asked him to make any real sharp cuts on that. We are having some special shoes brought in and things like that. We are being, probably, a little overly cautious. He's anxious to go, but given what he does for us, we've got to do the right thing."

Buckley quietly tending his work

General Manager Ron Wolf has had three main things to say about cornerback Terrell Buckley: 1) Buckley improved as 1993 ended; 2) 1992's No. 1 draft pick has not lived up to expectations; 3) He believes Buckley might well come through this season.

Buckley has worsened his situation, at least with fans and media, by making wild statements and predictions.

He is being more selective about which media members he talks to and what he says so far in training camp. Fellow defensive back and former Florida State teammate LeRoy Butler has given Terrell a lot of advice about life in the NFL and has been doing a certain amount of speaking on Buckley's behalf.

Fumbling got Buckley pulled from punt-return duties last season but the minor-league baseball player has stated he'd like to give special teams another shot. "He told me that, I believed him and we had a long, good talk," Coach Mike Holmgren said. "He came in early

"He's one of those third-year guys and the whole world opens up for you. In your own mind, you don't think you have to prove so many things to so many people. You just play football. And play it well."

Players hitting the pads each and every morning

When the veterans hit the practice field for two workouts their first day, July 24, they wore only helmets, jerseys and shorts — camp's attire up to that date. Full pads waited until July 25, unlike some NFL teams which had been hitting most of this past week.

"That comes up every year and I'm not saying this is the only way to do it, but it's how we've chosen to do it," Coach Mike Holmgren explained.

"I want the guys fresh on Sunday. In our training camps, we bang around pretty good in the mornings, I think. The afternoons, we give them a little bit of a breather (pads are only worn during the morning workouts).

"I think the difference is during the season," Holmgren maintained. "We don't bang so much or scrimmage so much during the season. I don't want to do it anyway, but then the last couple of years we've been hurt so much that we couldn't do it even if we wanted to. This is the way we want to do it. Other teams are successful doing it other ways."

Look for more 3 WR sets

The off-season acquisition of running backs Reggie Cobb and LeShon Johnson had the Packers considering calling more running plays this year. The necessity for that accelerated when tight end Jackie Harris, an outstanding deep-threat receiver, signed a free-agent contract with Tampa Bay.

But simply calling more runs will not be the only way Coach Mike Holmgren deals with his newest problem: Few healthy tight ends. (Remember, he makes frequent use of double tight ends in running situations.) Another variation will be increasing the frequency with which he uses three wide receivers.

"That's one of the things we are going to do," the coach said July 25. "We were going to do that anyway. Now, if it becomes more of a necessity, we'll certainly have to do that.

"There are pros and cons. You give up something in the run, there's no question about that. Another thing is you can anticipate seeing more nickel defenses, when maybe you don't want that — maybe you want to play against the base. Those are the downsides to that."

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Diary

Continued from page 5

Thursday, July 28

One of the highlights of Thursday morning's workout came during 11-on-11 goal-line work. Third-round draft pick LeShon Johnson found his assigned hole plugged in the middle, so he cut to the right, moved laterally along the line of scrimmage and then turned upfield, beating defensive end Matt LaBounty for the score.

"It really showed his speed," Holmgren lauded. "We're on the three yardline. Nothing to the inside. He pops it to the outside, the guy had a pretty good angle on him, but he just ran away from him and scored.

"He's capable of that type of play, given that type of situation. That's the exciting part about it."

Thursday was the first time Green Bay experimented much with the NFL's new communication system. A coach will have a handheld radio which provides him one-way communication with his quarterbacks, who will have a receiver/speaker in their helmet. He will be able to tell the QB what to do, up until 15 seconds before each snap, when the communication link will be broken by an NFL official.

"I like it," Holmgren said. "We are going to use it. I think it will help."

Experimentation also continues at tight end. "Talk about crash courses," Holmgren said. "It's kind of a revolving door right now, but we're trying to get the best combination. Certainly at tight end, we have a depth problem and we have to keep bringing guys in and finding the right combination."

The only stability at tight end is starter Ed West, an 11th-year man who will turn 33 Tuesday. "He's a pro," Holmgren said. "He is the one tight end we have who kind of knows what he's doing, really.

"The other guys are young pups and trying like crazy. Their heads are spinning but they are giving us everything they've got. But Ed knows what we're doing, so he should look pretty good out there."

Experienced tight ends are virtually nonexistent on the current market, but some may become available when teams cut to 60, Aug. 23 and to 53, Aug. 28. "I suspect that will go right down to the wire; when the cuts are made, if we want to head in that direction," Holmgren predicted. "We'll have to see. There are cap considerations, there are a lot of things to look at. That will be one of those things at the end that might be a tough call for somebody."

Friday, July 29

After as few as four days of workouts in full pads, the grind begins to take its toll.

There's the obvious physical toll: Starting right guard Harry Galbreath was held out of practice Friday because of back spasms. "Every once in awhile his back just tightens up, " explained Holmgren. "So we had to leave him up on a (training-room) table and let it relax just a little bit."

Key reserve linebacker Keo Coleman continued to miss workouts because of Achilles tendon soreness, apparently minor.

Reserve defensive lineman Gilbert Brown also sat out. "He had a little shoulder twinge," Holmgren said. "I don't think it's anything."

And there's the mental and emotional strain of 100 little daily battles which, put down on film and studied in detail, add up to whether a player will be employed or not at the end of next month.

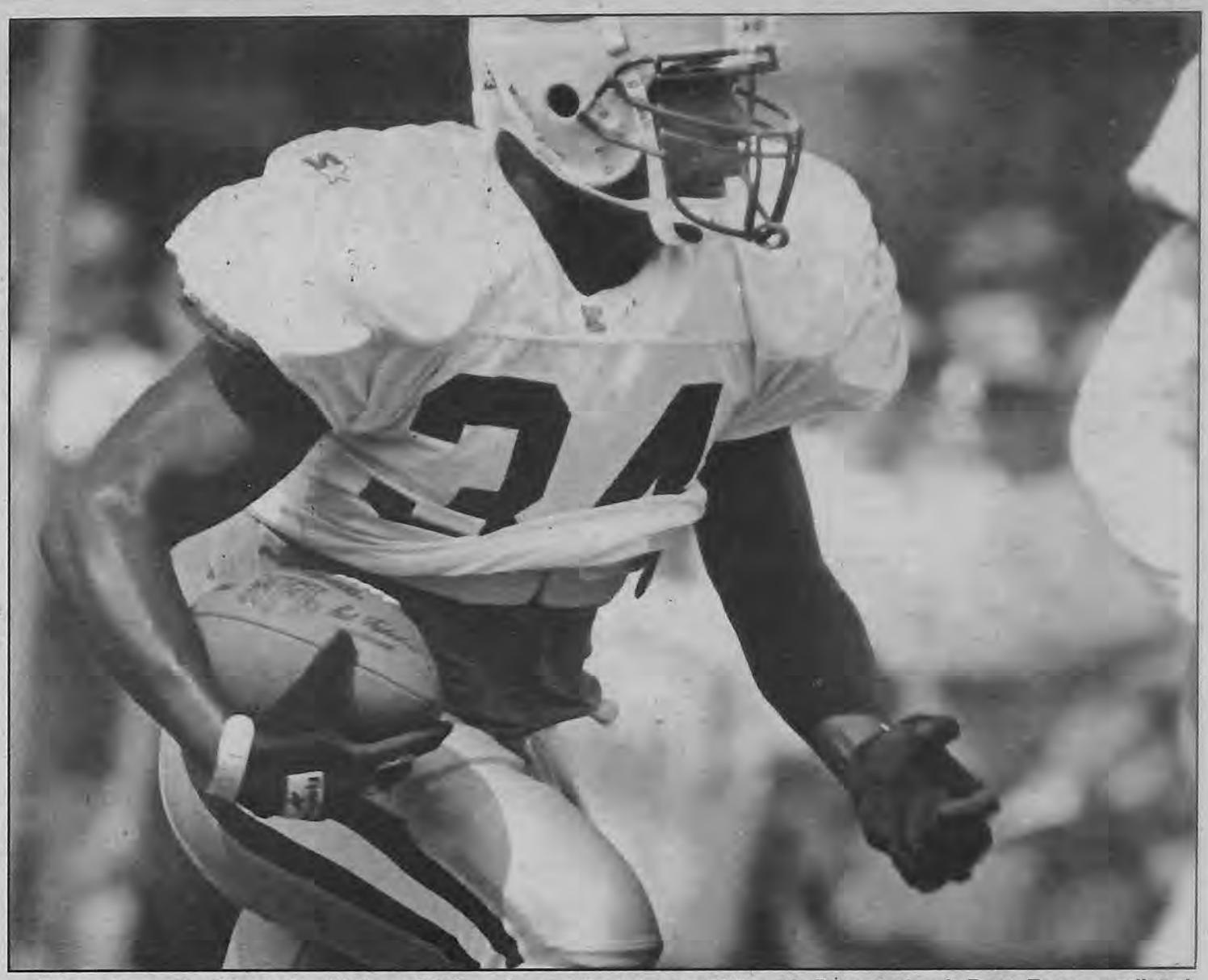
That strain can show itself in an incident like Friday morning's: Second-year tackle Mirko Jurkovic was apparently holding defensive end Reggie White, who has been to the last eight Pro Bowls in a row. White is patient but apparently had had enough and the youngster so. "Let me go," White demanded.

Jurkovic's response was inaudible to sidelines observers but certainly not to White. It seemed to set off White, who quickly moved toward the 24-year-old and let him know in no uncertain terms what he thought. And, in what for White is a very unusual move, just when he seemed to calm down, the 32-year-old made another move toward Jurkovic, but was restrained by defensive teammates.

"Don't you ever curse me again," intoned White, an ordained minister.

When a reporter later asked Holmgren about White "going after" Jurkovic, the head coach remarked, "He didn't really go after him, I wouldn't say. If he really went after someone, he'd probably get him, you know?"

Saturday, July 30



Edgar Bennett will run for "500 or 600" yards and "catch you 600 yards," quarterback Brett Favre predicted after Sunday's intra-squad scrimmage. Bennett led Sunday's rushers with 25 yards on four carries and caught two passes for an average of 10.5, including a 14-yarder. Favre also predicted "Reggie Cobb could easily get 1,200 yards this year."

-- James V. Biever photo

Wide receiver Robert Brooks practiced Saturday for the first time since doctors corrected a potentially dangerous heart condition that was discovered in a pre-training camp physical.

Holmgren said Brooks was fine physically and would start in the scrimmage Sunday.

"He's a good player and I'm really counting on him to have a great year," Holmgren said. "We were fairly certain that it wasn't anything serious, but it's still dealing with the heart, so it's great. He's excited."

Brooks said he felt no ill effects from the non-surgical procedure he underwent Tuesday, or from sitting out all week.

"I'm fine. I'm healthy. That's the bottom line," said Brooks.

Brooks, who isn't be on any medication or under any precautions, caught several passes Saturday but also dropped one when he bobbled a toss from Mark Brunell as he was stepping out of bounds. Frustrated, Brooks spiked the ball.

Holmgren said Brooks will play in the scrimmage with the first unit "if he feels fine. He practiced well today, so I think he'll be there. He might be at flanker, though."

Running back Adam Walker (knee) will miss the scrimmage but should be able to practice Monday or Tuesday, Holmgren said.

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Evaluating Brett

Dear Al,

In light of recent criticisms directed at Brett Favre, I would like to present some factors fans should consider when evaluating the performance of the Green Bay signal caller.

As a result of past involvement with football at the Division I college level, I truly appreciate a quarterback who has the ability to consistently "make plays." I define "making plays" as: the ability to create or improve an opportunity for success. Obvious examples of Favre's ability to "make plays" in nearly every game throughout the past two seasons. Having viewed all the Packers' 1992-93 games in person or on television, it is apparent to me Brett possesses this uncanny trait shared by few of his peers.

Although Brett has a promising future, he must continue to develop his game while limiting unforced errors. On occasion, Brett's attempts at "making plays" have resulted in costly turnovers. In some instances, Brett clearly made poor decisions, but I believe he understands his errors and will continue to improve.

There are, however, other related elements that should be weighed when judging Brett Favre's 1993 performance. They include:

1) An average offensive line hampered by injuries.

2) Lack of consistent running game and big-play threat out of backfield.

3) Lack of quality receiver opposite Sterling Sharpe.

4) Lack of deep threat to stretch defense — Sharpe's injury limited his ability to run deep routes.

5) Injuries to Jackie Harris eliminated him from six games and portions of two others.

6) Coach Holmgren accepted responsibility for putting Favre in some difficult situations.

These factors, coupled with Favre's relative inexperience, placed added pressure on the quarterback position and contributed to some of his misfortunes.

The maturation process is very difficult for most NFL quarterbacks and Brett Favre is no exception to this. Although inconsistent at times, Favre has clearly demonstrated the ability to successfully perform in the league. Brett led the Packers to victory in the playoffs and an overall 19-13 record in two seasons. It is a safe assumption he will continue to elevate his game as the Packers upgrade the personnel around him. The Green Bay management is pleased with Brett Favre's progress and Packer fans should share this sentiment.

Jason Rapp
Rochester, MI

Cheeseheads in Japan? Well, why not? Atsushi Okano of Toyko (no hat), who attended high school as an exchange student in Menominee, Mich. (which is only inches from Wisconsin), rounded up this group of Packer fans for one of the more interestingly posed photos this page has received.

Sterling couldn't do it without Brett Favre

Packer Report,

I have three things to comment on. First is the abuse Brett Favre has taken from some Packer fans. All these people seem to look at is the 24 interceptions. Let's look at the fact that he has led this team to its first play-off in 23 years and it's the first time having back-to-back winning seasons since the great Vince Lombardi. Sure, he made some bad passes, but let's not forget all the good ones; example: 40 yard TD to Sharpe to advance to the second round of the playoffs. Sharpe couldn't catch 108 and 112 passes without a good passer. Let's also remember that it was Brett's guts and toughness that bought Reggie White.

Speaking of Mr. White, I am also sick of people saying he hasn't performed. Since when can you say the leading sacker isn't performing. For the first time in years the defense is truely alive. They went from pretty good to the #2 defense in the NFL. Reggie is an inspiration. He gives other defenders like John Jurkovic and Bryce Paup more opportunities when he is double teamed. He may not make the defense, but he sure doesn't hurt it!

The last thing I want to mention is my disappointment in LeRoy Butler not making the original Pro Bowl roster and Sterling Sharpe being second and not a starter. Butler has really come through for the secondary. I was afraid the secondary would be lacking with the loss of Chuck Cecil, but Butler really stepped up his play. I have also noticed that in every other sports magazine poll he has been picked.

In my opinion the only thing Michael Irvin has going for him is that he is on the Cowboys. Irvin catches passes and makes TDs but he has little preasure with two other receivers and a good tight end, while Sterling has little relief. Also, look how Sterling has had another record breaking year while missing practice to turf-toe and having tendinitis. You don't have to be a Packer fan to know he is the better player.

In closing I would like to thank the Pack for the past two years. Being only 18, having a team in the play-offs is a new and exciting experience.

Indiana Packer Backer
Samantha Hartwich

P.S. Al, in reference to your question "Isn't Ron Wolf smarter than that?" in the Dec. 25 article on Favre's possible free agency, I have two words for you: Eric Dickerson.

Can anybody hear us?

Dear Packer Report,

I was seriously dismayed to learn of the NFC's defection to the Fox network. I have been a fan since the mid-50's and have watched every Packer game possible since that time. Being on Social Security Disability and not of means to rent or purchase satellite coverage, I'll miss the games in the future.

I live on a farm outside Elroy, Wis., hometown of Gov. Thompson. I receive CBS from La Crosse and NBC from Chippewa Falls. One or two unpredictable times per week, ABC from Wausau comes through. Any UHF, PBS or Fox programming is unavailable. The same is true for most in our area excepting those with satellite dishes, boosters, etc.

Our area wouldn't be considered impoverished, but most are more concerned with food, shelter and car costs than to allow the large outlay necessary to pay to watch our Packers.

Not everyone enjoys the bar scene. In fact, it's not proper for all ages or disabilities. Our idea of a day is to gather with a small group of close friends, watch, and cheer on our team as we have consistently done all these years. There are not alot of entertainment outlets that time of year. The Packers are the highlight of our week.

This change may not affect many in the cities. However, the Packers, centered in a less urban market than other teams, have significant rural support. Let us also remember the team is publicly owned.

Is there anything to be done to allay the fears of a most anxious constituency? Have we lost access to our team? I know Western Central Wisconsin is concerned. Anyone else?

Sincerely,
Gregg Erickson
Rt. 1, Box 134
Elroy, WI 53929
(608) 462-8986

Remember Bill Howton?

One of the most interesting aspects of Packer history is the enigma of the Packer offenses. Playing in the northern heartland, the land of early winters and frozen gridirons, it is remarkable how dominant the passing game has been, rather than the running game. And much of the passing game has been receiver-driven rather than quarterback-driven, the three great historical Packer receivers of course being Don Hutson, James Lofton and Sterling Sharpe.

One underrated and overlooked Packer receiver was Bill Howton. A second round draft pick from Rice in 1952, Howton spent most of his Green Bay career in the era between Lambeau and Lombardi, the Black Hole of Packer history, without television glamour or Titletown mystique. In a period of coaching and quarterback instability, Howton was a jewel of consistency. A pure deep receiver playing 12-game seasons, Howton averaged over 40 catches a season in his seven years in Green Bay. He could get the ball upfield, as his per catch average in the mid and high teens attest, and into the end zone, 43 touchdowns in 303 receptions. After one season under Lombardi, Howton was traded to Cleveland, but his skill and professionalism had helped to keep the Packers competitive during a difficult time.

William Stetson
Scituate, MA

More letters

Greetings from Tokyo

Dear Packer Report,

I've been a Packer fan since 1986, when I was an exchange student in Menominee, MI. Now, I returned to Tokyo, and I'm a college student. I've been subscribing to your Packer Report for two years, and I really enjoy it.

Since there are not many Packer fans in Japan, we have a hard time to get information about the Pack. But things are changing now. After the great season in '92, many people started to look at the Pack carefully. And the last year, when we became a contender, they showed 6-7 games of the Packers on TV. And of course, your magazine helps me a lot to get some information.

In April, I started the Green Bay Packer fan club in Japan. Currently, we have 14 members. We were introduced in a magazine called "Touchdown", the biggest football magazine in Japan.

I enclosed some pictures of ourselves. They are members of Tokyo Packer Backers, and some of them are your subscribers.

Please keep up the good work, and we'll always support you and the Packers from far east. Sa yo na ra!!

Go Pack!
Atsushi Okano
Tokyo, Japan

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WANTED: Will help pay satellite-feed costs for the opportunity to watch GBP games within 100 miles of Alpena, MI. Phone Mark Mutchler (517) 379-4519.

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WANTED: Tom Neuman. Dana in Hershey, PA is planning a Nov. 13 trip to GRB. Tom, please phone me (717) 274-5646 ASAP.

WANTED: Vermont Packer Backers to gather for a planning meeting and watching Saints' game. Phone Dave or Nancy (802) 223-3057.

WANTED: Place to watch GBP games in Philadelphia area. Phone Erik Olsen (708) 657-0138.

WANTED: VHS copy of 1971 made-for-TV movie "Lombardi" starring Ernest Borgnine. Will send blank tape. James Kocher; 306 Hanover Village; Wilkes-Barre PA 18702. Phone (717) 822-0310.

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